

THE FIVE CENT

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Chased Around the World: or, The Detective's Mistake. By A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.



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Chased Around the World:

OR,

THE DETECTIVE'S MISTAKE.

By A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNWILLING WITNESS OF A MURDER.

EVERY incident of this curious story goes to prove that truth is stranger than fiction. And it all happened only last year.

In the first place, you must know the hero of this strange adventure, and a few of his surroundings in order to understand it all.

George Benton had just graduated from the College of the City of New York, second only in a class of twenty-three.

He had come of age three months before that time, and now his first efforts were to get possession of fifty thousand dollars in government bonds which had been left him by a relation he had never seen, but who claimed to be his uncle by marriage.

In fact, beyond an antiquated old aunt, with whom he seldom came in contact—and the more seldom the better he liked it—he had no living relations, his mother having died soon after he entered college.

There was a mystery surrounding him and the fortune, (which he found no trouble in obtaining), for having been kept away from home the greater portion of his life, and never having seen his father, and but little of his mother, he hardly knew who he was, or why he so strangely became the possessor of such a handsome fortune.

And this made him exceedingly nervous, although the golden reality of possessing the money had a certain soothing effect upon him. But the strangeness of the affair caused him sometimes to wish his unknown benefactor had given the money to somebody else.

This state of affairs worked on him to such an extent that he forsook his haunts and companions, and kept almost entirely by himself, all the while trying to fathom the mystery surrounding him.

One night, about twelve o'clock, while walking along Broadway, near Thirty-first street, he heard the wild, supplicating cry of a female in distress, and instantly forgetting all his own ruminations, he flew to her relief.

Arriving at the corner of the street, and looking down Thirty-first street, towards Sixth avenue, he saw a man spring away from the prostrate form of a woman and dart towards the avenue with the speed of a race horse.

But he did not escape before young Benton recognized him as Tom Darley, a wealthy young man, who had the reputation of being mixed up in more intrigues than any other man in New York.

George Benton hastened to the side of the murdered girl. Her life blood was ebbing away rapidly, and the gas-lamp shone upon her pale, but beautiful features.

"Are you seriously hurt?" he asked, kneeling by her side.

"Yes—yes, I am dying. Tom Darley did it. Follow him; he has my diamond cross!" said she, faintly, and the next moment she gasped, and was no more.

Young Benton was seized with an unaccountable horror. He arose and glanced around. The bleak winds of winter were cutting through the streets like a winged scythe. The streets were deserted, no traveler in sight, and but a few dare brave the dark and relentless night, with the thermometer hovering around zero, and even ready to sink beneath it. The few policemen who were out skulked along with their heads muffled up, and more intent upon shelter than looking to the interest of those who naturally looked to them for protection.

"Great God! and such a thing as this happens right in the heart of the city, and yet there are no witnesses, no police! Ah, yes! there is one witness," said he, starting back. "I saw it all. What if the police come upon

me now? Would I not be held as the real murderer? And with all the mystery of my life around me, what would be my fate? Even though I might not be held as the real murderer, as my evidence, if found here, might enable me to make good, knowing the murderer, what would be the result? I should be thrust into the House of Detention and held there as a witness."

An approaching footstep, which rang out clear and crisp upon the midnight air, warned him.

"I will fly. She is dead, and I can do nothing for her without compromising myself, perhaps, and I will leave it all to the police."

Glancing around, he hesitated but a moment, and then sprang toward Broadway, and was soon far out of sight, but with a greater load on his heart than ever before.

Hastening to his boarding-house, he tried to sleep, but all in vain. The bloody secret that he possessed kept him awake the whole night long, and when morning came, he had made up his mind to go to the police headquarters, and report the whole affair.

But then the thought came up: He had made a sad mistake in not doing it before. What would be thought of him if he told all that he knew, and had the mystery of his own life probed, as it surely would be if he became the principal witness?

While ruminating thus, the morning Times was placed at his door. He seized it eagerly, and after glancing it over, came upon the following, under the head of "Local News:"

"ASSASSINATION!"

"A BLOODY MYSTERY—A CLEW TO THE MURDERER."

"While patrolling his beat last night, Officer Moody came upon the lifeless body of a beautiful woman, on Thirty-first street, near Broadway. She had evidently been dead an hour or more, and was frozen stiff. He rapped for assistance, and the body was taken to the Thirtieth street station house, where it was recognized as Maude Wagner, once a belle of New York, and although still one of the most beautiful women in the city, she had somehow become mixed up in certain social relations with some of our first families, and had, for the past year or more, been under a cloud. The police are actively at work to solve the mystery of her strange and tragic taking off, and have arrested several persons living in the vicinity, one of whom, a barkeeper at the Argyle Rooms, says that he saw a man kneeling over the body, and after apparently removing something from it, start and go down Broadway. He saw him plainly, and is sure that he will be able to identify him anywhere."

"It is hoped that such will be the case, as upon the surface of the affair it seems one of the most bloody, as well as one of the most mysterious cases that the police have ever been called upon to fathom."

"Great heavens! I am that person," said young Benton, "and now my mistake becomes more clear than ever. Oh, what a fool I am! I seem to be fortune's very slave. What will become of me? If I go to the police with the true story, here is this witness to go against me! What shall I do? Any way I may turn, misfortune and iron bars glare upon me. I have it! I will take the cars and go West—anywhere out of this, and anywhere to shun this dreadful position."

In half an hour he had packed his trunk, and ordering a carriage, he drove to the Barclay street ferry without loss of time.

But here he found that he was half an hour too late for the train, and was obliged to kill the time as best he could for three dreary, mortal hours.

An hour afterwards the newsboys came flocking to the ferry, crying their extras, giving further accounts of the mysterious murder. He purchased one and eagerly sought the account.

He read:

"FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE MURDER MYSTERY."

"THE BODY OF A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY FOUND MURDERED UPON THE STREET—THE POLICE ON THE TRACK OF THE MURDERER—A FULL DESCRIPTION OF HIM IN THE HANDS OF THE DETECTIVES."

"Our readers probably learned by the morning papers the rough particulars of the most fiendish and mysterious murder that has thrown a shudder over society for the

past ten years." (Here followed a full account of the tragedy, but which did not differ much from that contained in the morning papers.)

"It turns out that the murdered lady belongs to a wealthy family, her name being Maude Wagner; but owing to certain social irregularities, not of a debasing nature, she has been separated from her people for a year or more, and she has clung to the fortunes of a certain young man, who evidently not only tired of her, but killed her for some valuable diamonds which it is known she wore and refused to part with. It is supposed that they met last night in Thirty-first street, and that he demanded those jewels of her, and being refused, he murdered her and secured the property. But he was seen by at least one man, who is able to furnish a full description of him, and in addition to a reward of ten thousand dollars offered by her brother for the capture of the murderer, the police authorities have placed the case in the hands of the able sleuth-hound, Detective Elder, who, with the information in his possession, will be sure to bring the villain to justice."

The reading of this only confirmed him in the belief that he was the suspected party, and having plenty of time, he went into a barber shop where had his light mustache shaved off and his long hair cropped close, after which he looked in the glass and scarcely knew himself.

In the meantime, the authorities had come in contact with the private detective system—as they always do when there is a reward offered—and while Detective Elder worked in one direction, Detective Pinkerton formed another theory and started out to find the murderer in another direction.

All this, of course, George Benton knew nothing of. He only knew he had placed himself in a false but almost fatal position, and in order to be outside of it all, he resolved to take the cars and go to California, even if need be, in order to be away until the excitement blew over or the real murderer had been apprehended.

But he little knew the power, the penetration, the hidden ramifications of the Pinkerton Bureau of detectives. Nothing like it is to be found in any police force in this country.

Well, the time wore on, and finally the next through train was ready to start. Young Benton took the earliest seat, and with many misgivings and much nervousness awaited the starting of the train.

A few moments before the time for starting, a fine-looking, powerful man entered the car in which Benton was seated, in company with another man. There was a look of keenness about him that could not be misaken. He glanced around upon the passengers who were already seated, and as the cars moved slowly out of the depot, and he took leave of his companion, he said:

"Good-by, Harry; I may not be back in six months. I am sure that the murderer is on this train (and here he watched the expressions of every one), and you will not see me again until I return with him as my prisoner!"

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CHASE.

The train moved slowly out of the depot at Jersey City. The strange man, but evidently a detective, was seated only a short distance from young Benton, who was trying to look and act as calm and unconcerned as possible.

He glanced around once or twice, but each time he saw the keen eye of the detective upon him, and this of course increased his nervousness. He tried to brace up and seem entirely careless to all around him, but it was a failure.

Just ahead of him sat two men in one seat, one of whom was evidently an officer of some sort, and the other somebody in his custody. Benton watched them for some time, all the while trying to imagine who and what they were.

Finally Pinkerton walked forward and sat down behind the two men, and greatly to his surprise, the one whom he had set down as an officer turned round and greeted him in the most cordial manner, and he overheard the following conversation between them:

"Halloo, Bob, how are you?" said Pinkerton.

"Halloo, Al; business!"

"ell, yes."
 "What?"
 "Murder!"
 "That girl?"
 "Yes."
 "I read an account of it."
 "Big thing."
 "It seems so."
 "What's this?" he asked, nodding to the other occupant of the seat.
 "Queer."
 "Soap?"
 "No; nut."
 "Oh; off!"
 "Yes."
 "Where are you taking him?"
 "St. Louis."
 "Friends there?"
 "Yes."
 "Boodle?"
 "Big."
 "Good."
 "What's your lay here?"
 "That murder case."
 "How—on board?"
 "I think so."
 "Reward?"
 "You bet; that's my racket."
 "But what makes you think he's on board?"
 "Well, I have been working the thing all day, and as near as I can fix it, the fellow who did the job was traced to his boarding-house, and was seen to leave the house and go to the ferry. I have partially lost sight of him since reaching the depot, but in spite of any disguise which he may assume, I shall take him."
 "Ten thousand is not to be sneezed at."
 "You are right. Especially in these times."
 "I believe you. Been through the train?"
 "No; but I am going now, although I have a scent already."
 "Indeed. Here?"
 "Near by."
 "Want any help?"
 "No, thanks. Bad-looking cove you have got."

"Yes, he has raised the devil between Boston and New York, although he has been very quiet thus far, and may continue so to St. Louis."

"I hope so, for your sake. But I am going now," said Pinkerton, getting up and starting forward.

It so happened that the car they were in was the last one of the train, and although Benton had not noticed it until now, he now saw that the detective's head was level in going forward.

"But why need I fear?" he mused. "This detective evidently does not know me, or recognize me, or he would pounce upon me at once. All I have to do is to brace up and look honest, and I may yet escape all the danger that my foolishness brought me into. But what a life is this I have entered upon? Surrounded by a mystery which puzzles even my best efforts to solve, and placed by circumstances in a position which makes me but little better than a murderer, although innocent, what is to be the end of it all?"

He had hardly finished these ruminations before Pinkerton returned to the car, and again fixed his eyes upon him, although the officer in charge of the burly maniac spoke to him, and called his attention to something else.

"Spot?" he asked.

"Nix."

"Sure of first?"

"Think so," said he, again fixing his eye upon young Benton.

As this dialogue ended, Pinkerton walked up to the seat where he sat, but taking a seat in the one in front of him, he turned around and began a conversation.

"Beautiful afternoon."
 "It is indeed," replied Benton.
 "Going far?" asked the detective, fixing a searching glance upon him.
 "Well, not very," said he, after some hesitation.
 "Buffalo?"
 "Yes."
 "Further?"
 "Perhaps."
 "From New York?"
 "Yes."
 "Live there?"
 "Yes."
 "Long?"
 "All my life."
 "Hear about that awful murder?" asked Pinkerton, looking him full in the face, at which Benton colored.
 "Of the young girl?"
 "Yes."
 "I read an account of it in the paper."
 "Terrible thing, wasn't it?"
 "It was indeed."
 "Is there any clew to the murderer?"
 "None that I have heard of, beyond what is published in the papers," said Benton, whose face was alternately blazing red and pallid white.
 "Strange, isn't it?"
 "It is so. But I guess they will yet secure the murderer," said Benton.
 "I am sure of it," said the detective, with much emphasis.
 "I hope so."
 "Do you?"
 "Why not? Why should not every good citizen hope so?"
 "You are right. But aside from that, I somehow think I have seen you somewhere before. In New York, most likely."
 "Probably," said Benton, calmly.
 "But, pardon me, you used to wear a mustache, did you not?"
 "Never."
 "Oh, beg pardon."
 "Why do you ask these questions?"
 "Oh, only out of curiosity. I like to find acquaintances on a long ride, and so I am sometimes almost impudent, to appearances, in following out what I may fancy to be a resemblance to some one I have known."
 "Ah, exactly."
 "But, speaking of this murder, did you ever know any of the parties?" said Pinkerton, suddenly changing the line of conversation.
 "Me? Never."
 "But they say this Maude Wagner was well known in society."
 "So the papers say. But I have never been much in society," replied Benton, calmly, for he suspected the man who was questioning him.
 "Indeed. But that is all right. Pardon me for alluding to the subject. My name is Allan Thompson; might I ask yours?"
 "Certainly. My name is George Benton."
 "Benton? Any relation to the great western senator, 'Old Bullion'?"
 "Not that I know of."
 "In business anywhere?"
 "No, I have just graduated from college."
 "Indeed. Plenty of money, I suppose?"
 George Benton looked at him with an inquiring frown.
 "Beg pardon, but for some reason or other I take a liking to you, and as we are to travel quite a long way together, and as there are but a few passengers on board, why, I make bold to ask you these questions. But if I may seem rude, I assure you it is all on account of my wish to get on

terms of fellowship, that we may enjoy ourselves together."

"Thank you," said Benton, bowing.

"Have a drop of fine old Blue Grass?" asked Pinkerton, producing a flask and cup.

"Well, for sociability's sake, yes, I don't care if I do take a drop. That is plenty."

Suddenly Benton bethought him that the liquor might be drugged, and then hastily changing his manner, he said:

"Drink first yourself."

"No, oblige me," said Pinkerton.

"I never drink before my elders."

"But I asked you to drink."

"True, and I will do so, only allow me to suggest that you drink first."

"Oh, but he is a deep one," thought the detective.

"Well, since you insist, here is to our better acquaintance," said he, drinking it down.

"Thanks. Now I will partake."

"Of course. Say when."

"That will do; I am not used to strong liquors," said Benton, taking the cup.

"Indeed."

"No, I generally drink lager."

"That is very good. In fact, I almost always drink it myself; but it is so unhandy to carry that I generally fall back on whiskey."

"It is very good."

"I should say so. No better in the market. But, of course you will pardon me of speaking of your financial circumstances."

"Oh, certainly."

"I have a weakness in trade as well as a social weakness. I am a diamond merchant, and am always ready to buy anything in that line, and sometimes make good bargains while traveling."

"Indeed."

"Oh, yes. Have you any diamonds?"

"Not one."

"I would like to get hold of a diamond cross, for I have a customer for one, out of whom I am sure I can make a thousand dollars."

"If I had one I would surely make a trade with you, for a thousand dollars is not to be sneezed at in these times," said Benton, who had now fully recovered his composure.

"I don't care how it may have been obtained, I would buy it anyhow," said Pinkerton, as though musing.

Benton made no reply, and the conversation gradually changed. Night was coming on, and the lamps in the sleeping car were lighted.

"I'll wager my professional reputation that he is the murderer, and that he has the diamond cross," said Pinkerton, to himself.

CHAPTER III.

A DESPERATE ENCOUNTER.

FOR the time being the wily detective seemed to be baffled, although in his own mind, he felt sure that George Benton was the man he was after; but to make assurance doubly sure, he resolved to go on until he could betray him into some confession that would give him away, or make sure of his possessing the diamond cross that had been taken from the neck of the murdered Maude Wagner.

As night drew on with her sable shroud, the train arrived in Buffalo, beyond which point the car they had occupied would be turned into a "sleeper," and Pinkerton, while keeping up a friendly conversation, and seeming to be a traveler in search of congenial companions, resolved not to allow young Benton to get out of his sight, although he admitted to himself that he could find no flaw in his representation of himself.

"He is a handsome, honest-looking young fellow, and I see by close examination that he has lately shaved off his mustache—the only thing lacking to make his identity with the murderer complete—and yet, hang me if he don't seem to be anything but a bad fellow. And yet there seems to be a mystery about him—a hesitancy that is very suspicious," mused Pinkerton.

"Going to get out here for refreshments?" he asked, as the train stopped at Buffalo.

"Well, yes, I guess so," replied Benton, slowly.

"All right. We have twenty minutes. Sup with me. Excuse me, but somehow I like you," said the detective.

"Indeed."

"Yes."

"Thanks."

"Let us sup together."

"Very well," and they left the car together.

"I must betray him into some sort of a confession before we leave New York State, for after that it would give me trouble to hold him," thought Pinkerton, as they entered the saloon.

But Benton was on his guard, and as his object was to put as great a distance as possible between himself and the scene of the tragedy, he did not allow the wily detective to make a single point, but kept him at arm's length while they were eating supper.

But in this he also made a mistake, for Pinkerton saw that there was something back of all he was saying, and finding that he could not penetrate the mystery just then, he resolved to accompany him further on in the hope of doing so afterwards.

At the end of twenty minutes they again took seats in the car, but now they found themselves, including the officer in charge of the maniac, entirely alone in the carriage.

They commented on this for some time after the train left Buffalo, and as neither of the occupants cared to retire just then, the porter did not offer to make up the bunks.

After enjoying a cigar, during which the detective tried his best to draw Benton into some confession of his life and surroundings which would harmonize with the theory he had formed regarding the murder, he excused himself for a moment to go forward to converse with the officer in charge of the lunatic.

"An old acquaintance of mine, not a friend, however, but he may think it strange that I do not show him more attention," said Pinkerton, as he arose to go.

"Oh, certainly," replied Benton.

"Well, how are you making out?" asked the officer, as Pinkerton took a seat in front of him and turned around to converse.

"Not very well; I have got a hard case—one of the worst I ever had. I am sure and not sure. But, by-the-by, I suspect he has tumbled," replied Pinkerton.

"Tumbled? How?"

"He saw us conversing, and possibly overheard our conversation; in fact, I know he did. I gave it away to see if he would show signs, but he did not; and boy though he is, I think he is holding back right smart."

"Well, what next?"

"I have got to appear to him in another shape,"

"How?"

"He has tumbled to me as a detective, and now I must put on my togs and work another lay."

"Got 'em with you?"

"Have I! Did you ever find me without them?"

"I believe not. In fact, I think I saw you at church one night with them."

"If you saw me there at all, you did."

"How will you work it?"

"I'll make believe that I have got to stop at Erie, and bid him good-by. Then I'll appear as another person entirely, and pretend that I have seen him in New York, and make use of what I have already learned; just watch me and see how I will work it."

"I will."

"How is your customer?"

"Oh, quiet enough now, although there is no knowing how soon he will kick; but I guess he will remain quiet for a while yet. The motion of the car seems to soothe him."

And so the conversation went on for nearly an hour, when, seeing that Benton was showing indications of sleepiness, he returned again to the seat where he had sat.

"Well, I am sorry that I must leave you so soon," said Pinkerton.

"Indeed; I thought you were going through to Chicago," said Benton, in surprise.

"I did intend to do so. But come to think of it, it will forward my business more to step off at Erie and take a train to-morrow."

"I am sorry, for if nobody gets on at Erie, it will be a lonesome ride to Cleveland."

"Oh, there will be somebody get on most likely. But I trust you will have a pleasant trip, and that I shall meet you again."

"I trust so."

"Ah, this must be Erie," said he, as the cars began to slacken up. "Good-by," and he got up and shook hands with Benton cordially, after which he left the car.

The station stopped at was not Erie, but Benton never noticed whether it was or not; yet when the train started again he saw that the officer in charge of the maniac got up quietly and stood for a moment in the aisle regarding his charge.

It was evident that the poor fellow had been lulled to sleep by the motion of the car, and the attendant, either anxious to stretch his legs or go forward to where he supposed Pinkerton was, left him alone and started for the door.

He looked back as if to make certain that he still slept, and being assured, he closed the door and was gone from sight, leaving Benton and the maniac the sole occupants of it. But this he did not regard as peculiar, and yet, feeling that he himself would like a little recreation, he got up and walked to the rear end of the car and gazed out upon the flying landscape, now darkened, but fitfully lighted by struggling moonbeams.

"What a strange adventure is this," he mused, as he stood looking from the window of the car door. It will be remembered that this was the last car on the train. "I am flying from a shadow. Thank Heaven that detective has gone. He evidently learned his mistake, and took the first opportunity of getting away respectably. But I think it will be all right. I will step off at some city along the road, and there wait until the excitement has blown over or they find the real murderer. And even then it would not be safe for me to return and proclaim myself a witness, for I should be thrust into the House of Detention and kept there as a witness, Heaven only knows how long. And would it be safe for me to assume the role of witness even? If I did so, the entire mystery surrounding my life would be brought up, and what then? It is cowardly, I know, but why should I bare all my sorrows to the world for the sake of convicting a murderer? But stop. Should I not be quite as likely to be regarded as the murderer as Tom Darley? He was not seen by any one but me, it seems, while I was seen kneeling over the body by one at least, perhaps two. No, I will keep away. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and being in-

nocent of all wrong, why should I not take advantage of the law? I will; I have money enough, and I will go to the furthestmost part of the continent but that I will escape this terrible shadow and avoid the search into the mystery surrounding my life. But if I ever can circumvent Tom Darley, oh, how gladly I will give him up to the law."

Just then he felt himself seized by strong arms, and before he could offer any resistance, the door was pulled open, and he was thrust bodily out upon the rear platform.

The train was going at the rate of fifty miles an hour; there were no other occupants of the car to come to his rescue, and without knowing who had him in his grasp, or what was to be his fate, he clutched wildly at the supporting rods, and cried loudly for help.

"Cry to the spirit of darkness for help!"

"Help—help!" cried Benton.

"Cry again! I have you now! Ha—ha! I have been watching for this. You thought I slept. Fool! I have watched you always. Now I shall have the pleasure of dashing your brains out, and strewing your remains along this accursed road. What! you dare to struggle? Then I will choke the life out of you first, before I throw you to the wolves."

All the while he was saying this, there was a most desperate and determined struggle going on between Benton and the maniac, for he had recovered himself enough to see that he was in the hands of a wild man whom he supposed to be sleeping, as did his keeper, and with all the strength he possessed, he fought and clung to whatever he could catch hold of.

But he was only a child in the hands of the maniac, and in spite of all that he could do, he tore him from the rods he had clutched at, and lifted him bodily in his arms, holding him free and clear out from the platform.

"Now, then, who is master? Ha—ha! I shall be free, and you will be down among the devils!"

"Help—help!" cried Benton, finding that he was only a straw in the maniac's embrace.

"Oh, yes, I'll help you. Say a prayer!"

At that moment the train ran upon a bridge which spanned a dark and deep ravine.

"Have you prayed enough?" hissed the giant, in whose grasp he was.

"No—no! a moment more!"

Just then two figures appeared in the doorway, and the keeper of the maniac seized him by the throat, while the other man grasped Benton, and by an almost superhuman effort, both were drawn back, and the intended victim was saved from a terrible death.

The keeper was a man of powerful frame, and once he had succeeded in breaking the hold that the maniac held, he forced him back into a seat, and with the assistance of the stranger, succeeded in placing the handcuffs upon him.

"Great Heavens! how is this?" gasped Benton.

"Oh, I beg ten thousand pardons. I thought he was asleep, and so left him for a few moments. He must have been shamming, and when I had gone, set upon you, perhaps thinking that you were his keeper."

"I was standing here by the door when he seized me," said Benton, still breathing hard.

"Yes, and he undoubtedly thought it was me. But he will do no further mischief. I should have kept the darbies on him, only he appeared to be so well, and begged so hard to have his hands free."

"Dot vos von puddy nigh escape," said the stranger, turning to Benton.

"You are right, my friend. He has the strength of a giant."

"Bud dot ish all righd now; come we down

for a sead," said he, following the keeper and the maniac, who had started to return to the section they had formerly been sitting in.

Young Benton followed his new-found friend without saying a word.

Who was this new-found friend?

CHAPTER IV.

ONCE MORE IN THE TOILS.

THE Dutchman was a character, and young Benton seemed to take to him from the start. He was one of those jolly fellows to whom almost anybody would take, and after they were seated, and while still commenting upon the tragic occurrence, we may take a more particular look at him.

In reality it was Pinkerton, the detective, but so artfully was he made up, that those who might know him best would have failed to recognize him then. And yet there wasn't such a wonderful change in his clothing after all. In the first place, he had turned his cloth cap into an oiled-silk soft hat, it being one of those skilfully constructed articles capable of three or four changes in shape and style.

Then he had changed his coat, by simply changing the inside for the outside, and instead of being a black one it was now a sort of a rough and ready yellow, that looked as though it had seen many a hard rubbing and dozens of hard knocks. The mustache which he had previously worn (a false one) was in his pocket, and his face was entirely innocent of beard; while a tow-colored wig destroyed any further identity with his former guise or person.

And his voice and manner were as greatly changed as it is possible to imagine, for having a good idea of the German character, he succeeded admirably in imitating one of them in this instance, and so adroitly that Benton never dropped to it at all.

"Val, by tam! dot vos a pad pizness all der vile," said he, referring to the maniac from whom he had helped rescue him.

"I should say so," replied Benton.

"Ondly der dink, by jiminati, 'boud all dem railroad smash dot smash beebles in der pread-paskets blenty dimes, und den, py tam, dey keep 1 admens ter make funerals mit der bassengers."

"Yes; I should say there were natural accidents enough without putting us in the way of unnatural ones. But I am very much obliged to you, all the same."

"Oh, dot ish all righd, mine young frien'," said he, with a generous wave of his hand. "Vere vos you goin' from?" he asked, after a moment's pause.

"From New York."

"Ni Ark, eh? Vel, dat vos von tam blace, py jingoes! I makes me go to dot blace vonce," he said, musingly.

"Indeed! lately?"

"'Boud dree years behindt. I gome dere to see mine brudder Chon, dot keep a peer saloon on der Powery, und I bade you I vos pounced aroundt dot town puddy lifely. You see I vos green."

"Ah!"

"Yaw; and of all der blaces in der world for pouncing green Dutchmen dot blace id knock der spods oud of any odder blace in dot Ni Ark," and he laughed heartily, and there was a catching merriment in it which caused Benton to laugh also.

And then, having interested him, he went on to tell how he had been taken in and done for during his visit to New York, and although some portions of the narrative were more serious than comical, yet he told them with such humorous

grotesqueness that it would have made a cow laugh.

"Und dot blace is der vorst dot never vos for dem murders. Id is vot vonders me dot any-pody life in dot cidy. I dink, py tam, dot efery-pody kill each odder like dem cats dot life in Kilkenny."

Benton smiled feebly.

"Only chusd now I read me 'boud dot girl vot vos robbed und killed on der streed. Oh, py jimminy! dot vos a mean ting," he added, shaking his head sadly.

"Yes, it was, indeed," replied the young man, but he did not observe the keen eyes which appeared to glue themselves to every lineament of his features.

"You hear 'bout dot?"

"Yes, I read about it. What time is it, I wonder?" he added, consulting his watch, and showing plainly that he wished to change the subject. "Ah, it is nearly one o'clock; I shall retire," whistling the porter to make up his berth.

"Und dot ish me, too. How far you go?"

"To Chicago, I guess."

"All right. I speak me some more mit you in de morning."

"Very well; good-night," and the two men shook hands cordially, and separated, Pinkerton going into a forward car, leaving young Benton to disrobe and make the most of what remained of the night.

The man in charge of the desperate maniac had not only secured his hands and feet with manacles, but had fastened him to the seat in such a way that escape was impossible, and there he sat muttering to himself, while his keeper was leaning back and sleeping by his side. Pinkerton did not speak to him as he went out, and finally there was no sound in the car but what arose from its speeding rumble.

Sleepy and tired though he was, young Benton found it next to impossible to sleep, for the terrible events of the past few hours drove sleep far away, and made him almost fearful of being alone, even much less permitting him to slumber.

But sleep came at last, and clung to him until after the train had reached and left Cleveland, Sandusky, Toledo, and was speeding on like a whirlwind towards Chicago. At the different stopping places, however, several passengers had taken seats in the coach, and there was no longer any trouble about lonesomeness, as several of the party were very gay, and were beguiling the morning hours with cards, stories, and songs, having got through with their breakfast.

Benton ordered a hearty breakfast, and ate it while speeding along (for meals are served in the palace cars to those who wish them, and a person can ride from New York, or from the furthest city in Maine, for that matter, to San Francisco, without leaving the car), and he was watching his fellow passengers with more than ordinary interest, especially a beautiful girl, about eighteen years of age, who seemed to be in the company of some one she detested, and most likely the hard featured old man who sat near her.

His eyes were so constantly upon her that he forgot all his troubles, and even the German friend who had rescued and entertained him the night before. He had not yet made his appearance, and although he really expected to see him, yet he scarcely gave it a thought.

There was something so interesting, beautiful, although sad in the face of this young lady, that he found himself puzzling his brain regarding her. He was a very good reader of character, and reading her face, he found what seemed to be a tragic volume there. He grew more and more interested the longer he looked, and the miles sped by and the hours flew on without his scarcely noticing them, so absorbed was he.

At one stopping place he heard a conversation between the old man, who seemed to be her captor, and whom he had already learned to detest, and a servant, relative to the time the train would leave Chicago for St. Louis. This convinced him that they were going there, and having no particular destination, he at once resolved to follow on the same train, and read still further of the mystery that he felt existed about the beautiful girl.

From the conductor he learned that he would have to lay over in Chicago five hours before the next express started for St. Louis, and as he had also heard that particular train mentioned by the old man, he concluded that they would surely take that one.

This being settled he felt easier, and from his advantageous seat still watched the mysterious group, the central figure of which grew more and more interesting to him every moment. She was dressed in a warm, woolen traveling dress which took away much, but could not hide the beautiful symmetry of her person, any more than the veil, which half clouded her face, could the deep luster of her magnificent blue eyes, or the golden sunset which lingered in her tresses.

At length the train arrived at Chicago, and while getting out he managed to overhear enough to assure him at what hotel the party would stop while waiting for the St. Louis express, and thus he became to a certain extent the master of the situation. A closer view of the sad-faced siren who had changed all the melancholy of his own reflections, showed her to be even more beautiful and interesting than she had appeared to be from where he had all the while been observing her, and the look of utter repugnance which she bestowed upon the old man when he spoke to her on some subject, convinced Benton that there was no trace of friendliness for him on her part, while he appeared to be more like a captor with a prisoner than anything nearer.

As he alighted upon the platform, who should he encounter but Pinkerton, his good-natured Dutch friend of the night before.

"Halloo, my frient!" said he, extending his hand in the frankest manner.

"Ah, good morning."

"How you you vas all der vhfle?"

"Oh, all right. You didn't return."

"No, I find me some goot fellows from dis blace, und ve make some boker mit cards in dot baggage car."

"Indeed! Good fun?"

"Yaw; blenty, und some sdamps, too, I bade you," said he, pulling a handful of bills from his pocket.

"Good! I congratulate you," said Benton, all the while gazing after the party who had awakened so much interest, and who were just now passing out of the depot.

"Oh, dat ish all righd. Blay you dot boker game?"

"Not much," and he wished the confounded Dutchman was in Halifax.

"You stob in Chicago?" he asked, as Benton started to leave.

"No, I only wait over for the St. Louis express; but it is a long wait—five hours."

"Dot ish so. But dere am blenty to see in dis Chicago," said Pinkerton, walking along beside him, and mentally concluding that in all human probability he wouldn't have the pleasure of taking that St. Louis express.

"I daresay. Do you live here?"

"Yaw, und I show you some ding about it."

"Thanks. But I am going over to the hotel here to wash up and get some refreshments. Won't you come over and have something?"

"Vell, aboud dose times of day I finds dot some schnapps make me warm in mine pelly."

und I go mit you," said he, and they started away.

Arriving at the hotel just in time to see the party he was watching going in at the private entrance, Benton and his Dutch friend went into the bar-room, where something warming was partaken of, and everything was lovely.

"I am going up stairs to the wash-room now, and in the course of an hour or so I will take a walk out with you and see the famous city."

"All'd righd. I comes me back right away," and they shook hands and parted.

This was not exactly what the detective wanted, but thinking he had his man dead to rights, so far as confidence was concerned, at least, he concluded to wait awhile and make the best of it. He felt sure that he had the murderer of Maude Wagner, and yet he could, of course, not be positive. If he could only find the diamond cross on him, then he would be sure of it and know how to act.

During the time that he had not shown himself on the train, and while he pretended that he had been playing poker in the baggage car, he had been employed in an altogether different way. At Cleveland he had sent back a telegram to one of his confidential agents in New York, asking him if any clew had yet been found to the murderer, telling him to answer at Toledo. And at this city he had received a reply, stating that the whole affair was still wrapped in the deepest mystery, and no clew obtained.

This of course confirmed him in his suspicions, and so he had put up a little job with his agents in Chicago that he felt certain would entrap young Benton.

At the appointed time he was back again to the hotel—having perfected his plot in the meantime—and finding Benton ready they started out together to see the city. And to a stranger it was something worth seeing, for Chicago is one of the finest and brightest cities in the world.

At length Pinkerton proposed to show him into one of the most fashionable and renowned gambling houses in the west, and having heard much of it he was nowise loth to go, and was shown over it, and finally into a private room where there was a well-stocked sideboard, and every evidence of luxury.

Offering him a chair, he asked him to be seated and remain a few moments while he went for the proprietor—with whom he was acquainted—for the purpose of showing still further curiosities.

Benton sat down and Pinkerton left the room. But hardly had he done so before four men, masked and disguised, stole into the room and covered him with their revolvers. Benton leaped to his feet in astonishment and alarm.

"Shell out! Money or life!" said the foremost.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded, making a movement as though to produce a pistol.

"Ah! Hold up your hands or off goes your head."

"Help!"

"Hush up, or we'll bore you. Shell out."

"This is robbery."

"We know it," said the ruffian, and while the others approached nearer with their cocked revolvers, he proceeded to go through him, taking everything from his pockets and placing it upon a table.

After going through him in the most approved highwayman's style, a signal was given and Pinkerton came into the room. In an instant the robbers fled, leaving everything where they had placed it.

"Vas is dat?" he asked, examining the booty.

"I have been robbed."

"Did dey take somedings away."

"No, you frightened them away. But what kind of a place is this, anyway?"

"A square blace, but dem dirdy loafers dey chust scare you vile I vas away; I vill have dem fixed, I bade you. I go to der boss 'bout id, you bade I vill."

"And I'll return to the hotel. But it was lucky that you returned just as you did, and that I had given the most of my property into the keeping of the Express company to take to St. Louis," said Benton, gathering up his money and valuables.

Pinkerton was all apologies while returning to the hotel with him, but at the same time he was very thoughtful. They parted good friends, and the detective walked slowly up the street.

"Foiled again, by thunder!" he muttered.

"He has sent his valuables by express, eh? and my little game of robbery in quest of the diamond cross did not work. Well, then, I must go to St. Louis, for I must not fail."

Going to the telegraph office, he sent this message to New York.

"Telegraph me to St. Louis," and then he made preparations in a new disguise, to follow the supposed murderer.

CHAPTER V.

A CURIOUS MISHAP.

THE more George Benton thought of his adventure at the gambling house the more it puzzled him. It was evident that he had been taken there for a purpose, but what could that purpose have been? It could not have been robbery, for beyond searching his person, as though looking for some particular thing, they had really made no attempt at securing any booty.

And when his German guide returned to the room, how quickly they fled, and how curiously the whole affair had ended! It was an enigma that he could not solve, whichever way he turned it.

As the time for the departure of the St. Louis express drew near, he walked over to the depot in order to be there in time and to make sure of obtaining a section in the same car with the mysterious company that had interested him so much on the way from Chicago.

The servant soon appeared and went to the window of the ticket-office to purchase seats. By standing close, as though anxious to buy his own, he ascertained the section he had purchased, and bought the one next to it. Fortune had favored him thus far.

As he left the window, an old man who had been standing just behind him called for another section in the same car, but as Benton had secured the last one, he was obliged to get a seat in another part of the train. He did not notice this old man, but could he have looked under that grey, respectable exterior, he would have found Pinkerton, the detective.

Once under way Benton soon forgot everything save the beautiful, sad-faced girl who sat only a few feet in front of him. The expression of pain which flitted over her face occasionally, and especially when the hard old man at her side made any remark to her, were mournful to behold.

At Springfield, Illinois, the train stopped for fifteen minutes, during which time Pinkerton passed and repassed the car in which Benton sat, and it struck him as strange that the same party occupied a compartment in the car, having before noticed that the young man had become greatly interested in the beautiful girl.

There is a large lot of mystery in that one car," he mused. "Where have I seen that old man's face? Somewhere, I am certain. And what is he mixed up with? By Jove! I think I have

struck something else here. I'll look over my book on the road to St. Louis, and perhaps I can locate him."

Just then the cars started again, and the whole scene was changed. The ride from Springfield to St. Louis is about the same as from Chicago there, but night soon closed in, and all without the car was darkness. The berths were made up by nine o'clock, and the weary passengers retired, glad to get into horizontal positions for a change.

The night was exceedingly dark, but by traveling south at the rate they had been going, the climate had moderated greatly, and in place of ice and snow, there were indications of coming spring, and a warm breath from over the landscape.

But while the train was flying onward through the darkness, there was being another scene enacted, one that is in no way related to the thread of this story, although it was destined to have considerable effect upon it.

The night was nearly spent, and the grey streaks of dawn would soon be flitting up the east.

The train was approaching Alton. The stop there was only a short one. As they started again, one of the colored porters stole out upon the platform between the two last cars of the train. There was no brakeman there, he being stationed on the rear end of the last car. He glanced carefully around, and in at the window of the rear car. There were only a few passengers in it, and they were nodding in their seats.

"Dar he am; I hnews him; he am Al Pinkerton, an' I knows what he am gwine to 'St. Louis fo'. He hab got on track ob de boys 'bout crack-in' dat crib in Kawgo. But I'll jus' fool him dis time, an' put de boys on der guard," saying which, he reached up and cut the bell-cord, so as not to give an alarm, after which he waited a moment longer, and glanced eagerly around.

They were about three miles from Alton, going on an up grade. Reaching down, he pulled out the coupling pin, and instantly there was an opening between the cars. Without waiting another moment, he returned softly to his post in the sleeping-car, and pretended slumber.

The uncoupled car, of course, decreased its speed, and finally came to a stand still. The brakeman, who was asleep at his post, aroused with a start, and looked around him. The passengers were sleeping, all unaware of anything wrong. He glanced towards the forward end of the car, but could see no light from the "sleeper." Instantly concluding that something was wrong, he ran to the front platform, and set the brakes just as the car started slowly down the grade.

His lantern showed him that there had been no breakage, and he was at a loss to account for it. Then he went into the car, and touched the first passenger whom he met to arouse him and get his advice. It happened to be Pinkerton. He quickly explained to him all that he knew respecting the affair, and the detective thought he saw it all at a glance. Benton had penetrated his disguise, and had taken this means to throw him from the trail, and if there had before been any doubt in his mind regarding his guilt, there was none now.

"Where are we?" he asked.

"Not far from Alton, I think. No, only a few miles, for I recognize that mountain yonder, as the daybreak discovers it."

"What is the grade?"

"Down towards Alton."

"Any other train following?"

"No, there will be no train either way until near eight o'clock," replied the brakeman.

"And it is six now? Loose your brake, and

let her run back to Alton, where we can get on a side track, and be able to telegraph to St. Louis."

The idea seemed a good one, and the brakeman at once acted upon it. The car began to move slowly at first, but gradually attained a speed of twenty miles an hour, though under perfect control of the brakes. It was now daylight, and when the aroused passengers saw their position, there was much excitement and indignation.

But not one of them felt the delay so keenly as did Allan Pinkerton. He did not like to be outwitted, but he had been in this case most effectively. On arriving at Alton, after a considerable delay, a message was sent to St. Louis regarding the affair, and answer came that the car would be picked up by the next accommodation train, due there at about nine.

Pinkerton was almost beside himself. It was too early to reach any of his offices in St. Louis by telegraph, and all he could do was to clench his teeth and wait.

"I am sure of his guilt now, and he must not escape me, no more than must Rodney Barlow. I thought I knew him, and could locate him. He is wanted in New York for forgery, and I may just as well kill two birds with one stone. This fellow, Benton, as he calls himself, is evidently greatly taken with the girl the old man has with him. Who is she, I wonder?" he mused, as he paced up and down the platform of the depot.

He pondered over it for some time, and while eating his breakfast in the lunch-room, he concluded that there must be something wrong in his being with such a beautiful, refined girl anyway, and he resolved to look into it.

"At all events," he muttered, as he lighted a cigar and went out upon the platform, "I am sure of one thing, and that is, wherever I find one I shall find them all."

CHAPTER VI.

AN UNLOOKED FOR COMPLICATION.

WHILE all this was being enacted on the car that had been cut adrift, the remainder of the train was speeding along towards St. Louis, where they arrived before many of the passengers had arisen.

The conductor had retired, this being the end of his run, and the car was safely in charge of the guilty porter who had cut the other adrift. But he did not wait a moment after reaching St. Louis, for he had the remainder of his job to work—that of informing his friends of their danger.

Young Benton remained in the car until he overheard a conversation between Rodney Barlow and an express agent, and then he moved out, fully understanding which way he was to go. Barlow and the young lady followed after, not, however, until a look of recognition had passed between her and Benton, for having journeyed so far together, she could but regard him in the light of an acquaintance, although as yet they had not spoken. In fact, it appeared to be a part of Barlow's plan to prevent her from speaking to anybody.

Breakfast was ready in the depot, and the train for Denver, Colorado, or, what was called the Pacific express, since it connected with the great Union Pacific road at Cheyenne, was to start in half an hour.

Benton again secured seats in the same car, and this time, when they were under way, Barlow noticed it with a frown. He had seen him ever since leaving Chicago, and being guilty, he felt ill at ease seeing him again in the same car. But Benton had formed his opinion respecting him long ago, and he didn't care a snap for either his smile or his frown, and he only wished that fortune would give him a chance of punching his

old head in the interest of the young lady with him.

From St. Louis to Denver is a long stretch of about eight hundred miles, being nearly a whole day's run, and those who had taken seats in the train settled themselves as best they could for the long ride.

The country is most beautiful and grand in its luxuriant and majestic diversity. The entire width of Missouri, the whole length of Kansas, and about one half of Colorado is taken in by the journey, and nowhere on the whole earth is there so much to be seen in a like distance.

As yet Benton had not been able to learn where Barlow was going, although he shrewdly suspected that his destination was San Francisco or Sacramento, California. But having no particular destination himself, he cared but little where they went; he had made up his mind to follow them and make the acquaintance of the mysterious young lady, who was so constantly in his mind that he took but little notice of all the beauties of nature they were speeding past.

But let us turn to the discomfited detective.

He did not arrive at St. Louis until past ten o'clock, and not until the Pacific train had been long on the way, and from the baggage-master he learned that his party had gone on to Denver, from whence they were to continue on to Cheyenne, and there join the Pacific mail.

Instantly an idea struck him.

Turning to the railway map and guide, he consulted it intently for the next five minutes.

"I can do it," said he, at length, consulting his watch. "In ten minutes the express train will start for Kansas City, St. Joseph and Omaha. There I can strike the Pacific Mail train, and if nothing happens I can get to Cheyenne on the very train they will most likely take. It is a long ride, and a desperate one, but I am good for it."

When the train moved out of St. Louis, Pinkerton was on board with all his plans matured.

This was not the first chase he had had after criminals, for it was safe to say that no detective of modern times has gone over so much ground and arrested so many malefactors as has Allan Pinkerton.

He is a very sleuth-hound, and will follow his game around the world rather than miss his point.

But it may not be interesting to narrate the details of that sensational trip from St. Louis to Omaha; suffice it to say, however, that he reached the junction of the two roads an hour behind time, owing to the snow, but fortunately found that the Pacific Mail was even more behind from the same cause, and so he was favored just as he could have wished.

And yet he was not sure until he had consulted with the conductor, giving him the time that the Denver train started from St. Louis, and then upon comparing notes it was found that this was the first through train that they could take; for they would not arrive in Denver in time for Thursday's through train, and consequently would be obliged to remain there over night, taking Friday's through train, which was to join this one at Cheyenne.

The conductor's calculation proved true. The roads were not in very good order, and none of the trains were on time. But at Cheyenne they found the passengers from St. Louis waiting.

Pinkerton's quickeye took in everything. He saw his men, and knowing that he could do nothing while on the road, and knowing that they were going through to California, he concluded to take thing easy, and wait until their arrival before making any move towards arresting them.

On—they sped, night and day, over the wide stretching continent, and finally, when

near the Great South Pass, in Wyoming Territory, there came a sudden concussion, a wild crash and tumble, and the train hobbled along a few rods, and doubled up with a terrible sensation.

Had they run off the track, or had there been a collision?

All was confusion and dismay. Passengers were scrambling here and there. Some were shrieking, others calling upon those around them to be calm; but before any idea of what had really happened could be had, the doors at each end of the car where our characters were seated were burst open, and forty or fifty wild Indians rushed in, armed to the teeth.

Then the alarmed passengers knew that the train had been thrown from the track by these fiends, and that—robbery being their game—the only hope left them was in a fight to the death.

Bravely and unhesitatingly did they meet the issue. Pistols were drawn, and in an instant a lively fight was going on. Dozens were killed on both sides, but the Indians attacking the train being more than a hundred in number, and armed equally well, were too many for the passengers, who were finally obliged to surrender and submit to robbery.

But that was not all. They carried away several prisoners, among whom were George Benton, Pinkerton, the detective, and the young lady whom he had become so much interested in.

The train was almost a wreck, and those who had escaped capture gathered about the ruin, and consulted about what should be done. A telegraph operator who happened to be on board came to the rescue, and by breaking the wires he managed to communicate with San Francisco, and to summon aid.

But what of the prisoners who had been taken by the savage Indians?

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE HANDS OF A CRUEL ENEMY.

AMONG those left on board the wrecked train by the Indians who had waylaid it, none were in such a state of mind as Rodney Barlow. The young girl in his company had been taken away as a captive, and he was almost beside himself with anxiety and remorse.

Night was coming on, and as yet all was confusion and uncertainty. The Indians were too strong in numbers to think of following them, and yet they had gone away, laden with rich booty, and, strangely enough, with prisoners whose fate could only be conjectured, and yet who were all antagonistic to each other.

George Benton and Allan Pinkerton, the detective, were both prisoners, the one the supposed fugitive murderer of Maude Wagner in New York, and the other the renowned detective following for his capture.

We will not follow the fortunes of those on the train, further than to say that the telegraph dispatch which the operator sent, who chanced to be on board the wrecked train, was answered, and in a few hours help was forthcoming, and the train was repaired and again set in motion with a portion of the passengers towards San Francisco.

But let us turn rather to the captive whites who were in the hands of the Indians—the savage highwaymen who had robbed the train.

Without mentioning two or three others who were prisoners with our friends, one of whom was tied to Pinkerton, let us notice that, strange as it may appear, George Benton and the mysterious young lady whom he had accompanied so far, and with whom he had become so much infatuated, were tied together, and marched along over the frozen way.

"My dear girl, I trust you are not harmed?" said he, as they marched along.

"No, not bodily, as I can feel; but the excitement has made me almost numb to everything," said she.

"I hope and trust that you are not hurt?"

"But where will those savages take us?"

"Heaven only knows."

"Who are taken with us?"

"Only three or four; one an old man——"

"An old man!" she exclaimed, stopping short, and glancing around.

"No—no; not the old man who accompanied you," said he, quickly.

"Thank Heaven!" she murmured, fervently.

"That he is saved?"

"No, that I am saved from him—taken from him. Oh, let the Indians drive me on, anywhere, so long as they put a distance between us!"

"Do you then detest him so cordially?"

"I do—God knows I do!"

"I suspected as much from the first. You may not know it, but I have watched you ever since I first saw you, before we reached Chicago, and I have sympathized with you, feeling that you were not happy. Our way lays over a rough path, and these frowning woods gather the darkness around us ere night is come; we are in the hands of a cruel and implacable foe, perhaps, but if you will accept my friendship, such as it is, I freely offer it."

"I thank you, sir; we do not feel entirely like strangers, since we have traveled so far together, and even were we so, this affair would make us friends," said she, with unaffected simplicity.

"And you will accept what friendship I have to offer?" he asked, again turning to her eagerly.

"I do; but it may not last long?"

"Why so?"

"Because we do not know what our fate will be with these savages."

"True; but with the last breath I have, I will protect you from harm."

"We are bound," said she, gazing into his face.

"True; but I will study up some way to get ourselves unbound and free. Do the thongs hurt you?"

"Yes, I think my wrist has swollen since they bound us together."

"Hush! Darkness is coming on. They have not yet removed my weapons. Probably in the hurry they forgot to do so. I have my pocket knife and revolver. Wait a moment longer until we are sure that their keen, cat-eyes cannot see the operation and I will cut the cruel thong."

"But would not that excite them to greater deeds of violence, or at least hurry on our fate?"

"I think not, for this reason. Do you hear the wild shouts of those in advance?"

"Yes."

"Well, they seized three or four large demi-johns of brandy on board the train, and already have they fallen greatly under its influence. This may make them more savage, and it may at the same time make them more careless of their prisoners."

"Perhaps. Oh, how dark it is getting, and how bitterly cold," said she.

She was dressed very warmly, but her feet were cold and numb, and her clothing wet from trailing in the snow. But she bore up bravely and was even half cheerful, evidently thinking of the worse fate she had before been flying to.

The Indians were evidently nearing their village, but the brandy they had drank had by this time made the most of them so drunk that they knew little and cared less of what was going on behind them.

But those savages who remained as guards in

the rear, some four or five of them, had as yet received none of the "fire-water," although it was evident that they were both hungering and thirsting for it.

Presently, however, one of those in front who had become too drunk to longer carry one of the demi-johns, let it fall into the snow and staggered along, happy with what he had inside.

Quick as ravenous wolves would have snapped a mouthful of bloody meat, did the savages seize and fight for the first swig.

It was dark, but George Benton could see enough to convince him that the time was ripe for action on his part; he took advantage of this new diversion, and drawing his knife from his pocket he cut the rawhide which bound his arm to that of the beautiful girl.

"Careful, now; let us walk along as nearly as we were walking before as possible, so as not to excite suspicion."

She answered by frankly taking his arm and gazing into his face with a look of the most intense thankfulness.

In the meantime, the hoggish Indians in their rear were becoming quite as drunk and hilarious as were those in front. The jug was being passed from one to the other as fast as they could drink, and while fighting for the last dram they swayed to the westward so far that Benton and his fair companion were left almost entirely alone.

"Quick! let us turn and follow back!" said he, stopping.

"No—no, not for the world!" said she.

"Why not, pray?"

"He might be following us."

"But think a moment. We are in a dense forest, and out of which we know no way save by the tracks we have made in coming here."

"That may be true, but I would rather brave the dangers of the forest than run the risk of meeting him again," said she, with a shudder.

"But we might escape him."

"You do not know Rodney Barlow."

"Very well. You shall command."

"This way, then," said she, pulling his arm, and starting through the darkness at a right angle to the path they had come.

Benton followed, all the while glancing back to see if their absence had been noticed. For an hour or more they plodded onward through the darkness, made doubly dark by the tall pines that stood around.

Every now and then they would stop and listen, but further and further away seemed the sounds of the drunken Indians, and hope began to dawn in their breasts.

At length they were surprised by a couple of wolves who darted up from behind some bushes, and ran into an opening at the side of a hill that was just before them.

"Great Heaven!" she exclaimed, starting back, "what are those?"

"Wolves, I think."

"But is there no danger?"

"No, they are even more cowardly than the Indians are. There is a cave there undoubtedly, and if we could only get into it we could find shelter."

"But only think of it. Don't attempt it," said she, holding to his arm.

"But you need shelter, and I will brave all the wolves in these wilds for you," said he.

"No—no; do not go!"

"They will not harm me."

"I fear they will."

This made his resolution doubly strong, and gently but firmly, removing her arm from his, he drew his revolver and started for the mouth of the cave, she all the while imploring him to return.

But he was resolved, and pushing aside the bushes which grew near the mouth, he carefully felt his way into the cave.

Fierce growls in a far away corner of what he knew to be a large cave, greeted him as he entered, and he could plainly see the fire of their flashing eyes as they crouched and glowered upon him.

Taking aim with his revolver at a pair of those fiery eyes nearest to him, he fired, and a yell of pain assisted the pistol in awaking the echoes of the cave.

There was a rush past him, and he saw by the light of the snow which lay near the mouth that half a dozen wolves had sought safety in flight.

Then he took a match, from his pocket and struck a light. Its puny flicker scarcely reached to the furthest side of the cave, but by its light he saw some dried grass which the wolves had used for making nests, and he at once set it on fire.

This enabled him to see the extent of the cave, and also some wood and the bones of slain animals which had been dragged there.

The trembling girl crept to the mouth of the cave, and peered timidly in.

CHAPTER VIII.

A NIGHT IN A CAVE.

"COME in," said Benton.

"Is there no danger?"

"Not as much as there is outside. The wolves have all fled with the exception of the one over there."

"Heavens!" she exclaimed, turning as though to retrace her steps. "Is there one remaining?"

"Yes, but he is dead. Come along by the fire, for the smoke will suffocate you there by the entrance," said he, taking both her hands and leading her into the cave.

"What a terrible place," said she, glancing around, for the fire was now lighting the whole interior.

"Yes, my friend, but how much better it is than to be outside there in the snow-storm."

"You are right, and how courageous it was of you to enter and drive them out. Oh, how cheerful that blaze looks, and how grateful I am for its warmth," she said, as Benton gathered up more wood to place upon it.

Cheerful, indeed, must it have been to the poor, tired, bedrabbled girl, for although she was dressed warmly, her feet and ankles were cold and wet from her long march through the snow.

The cave was about as large as a house, and was very warm and dry, and after the fire had got well ablaze they began to feel a sense of great relief.

The storm without was on the increase, but they could defy it now, provided the Indians did not miss them and get upon their trail, a thing they would not be likely to do in such a storm, since every trace of the way they had taken was lost in the falling snow.

But what a change a few hours had wrought in their destinies.

Benton consulted his watch. It was ten o'clock. The cave was giving them shelter, and the fire had driven away all fear of freezing. But how about food? He bethought him of his bag which he had not been robbed of, and which he had thrown aside as he first lighted the fire.

It contained a single sandwich and several necessary articles for a traveler.

"Fortune favors us yet; take this," he said, handing it to her, "for you must need it very much."

"Thanks, Mr. Benton, but not if this is all you have," said she, earnestly.

"Oh, I am not hungry."

"Ah, pardon me, but that cannot be. But let us share it between us."

"No—no, for when morning comes I can—Ah, what is that?" he asked, glancing towards the mouth of the cave, at the same time drawing his revolver.

"Mercy! Are we pursued?" she cried, clinging to him.

"Yes—by good fortune. See that rabbit that has just stolen in at the mouth of the cave. Poor little thing, the bitter storm has driven it here for shelter," said he, firing at it as it stood reared up on its hind legs, gazing in astonishment and alarm at the fire.

"Oh, you have killed it!"

"Yes, but how much worse would its fate have been had the wolves pounced upon it? This shall make us a supper and breakfast," he said, picking up the dead rabbit and bringing it towards the fire.

"Fortune does favor us, indeed; and oh, if she will only be with us to the end," said she, fervently.

She took the sandwich, and began eating it, while Benton set to work to dress the rabbit the best he knew how, and as the firelight shone on the group, it produced a very effective picture.

"Were you going through to San Francisco?" she asked, looking up into his face.

Up to this time they had talked but little regarding themselves, and beyond her knowing that his name was George Benton, and he learning that hers was Clara Stanley, they had not conversed.

"My dear girl, that depends very much upon where you are going, for I must admit that I have simply been following you since I saw you."

"Following me?" she asked, in surprise.

"I acknowledge that I have been."

"For what reason, pray?"

"Because I—I became greatly interested in you. You seem to be so unhappy," said he, bashfully.

"As indeed I was."

"I thought so; and having nowhere to go that my heart would enjoy so well, I have followed on and on in the hope of knowing you."

"And how strangely fortune has thrown us together," said she, with much earnestness.

"It has, indeed, and I hope I am not presumptuous in wishing that she may always keep us near each other."

The look she gave him he never forgot.

"At all events," said he, seeing that she did not make reply, "I trust that our friendship at least may make you less unhappy than that of this man Barlow."

"Oh, sir! I could spend my life here in this cave sooner than live in luxury with him."

"Thanks. But we shall escape, I feel it. Yet tell me, who is this man Barlow?"

"He is a real estate dealer in Boston, or somewhere, I believe, and he claims to be my guardian."

"Claims to be? But has he not the papers to show that he is what he claims to be?"

"Yes; his authority appears to be all right."

"But have you never had it tested?" asked Benton, looking up from his work.

"Yes, I have. He and my father were mixed up in several real estate operations, and finally went to California, where father appears to have conducted his business independently of him, and to have amassed a large fortune before he died, consisting, as I have been told, of one or two mines of great richness. Barlow claims to have been with him when he died. At all events, he accompanied his remains east, and there showed guardianship papers, together with a document, purporting to have been signed by my father just before his death, wherein he gives

me to him when I arrived at the age of eighteen, in which case I was to inherit all his property; but if I refused to comply, the property was all to go to Barlow one year after my refusal to marry him.

"What a strange thing for a father to do."

"It was indeed; and I never believed that he signed it. But ever since then he has managed the property left by father, and for the past few years we have been entirely dependent upon what he is pleased to call his generosity. Well, as I drew near the age specified, he became even more exacting and tyrannical than ever, and for poor mother's and sister's sakes I have consented to marry him, and this visit to California is for the purpose of getting those mines into his possession, and at the same time to marry me," said she, with a shudder.

"It is no wonder that you looked so mournful. But why is it necessary to take you there if he is your father's executor and guardian?"

"That I do not understand. He tried to explain it to me once, but I am as ignorant now as before."

"I do not pretend to know much about such things, but it seems to me that a legally appointed guardian has a perfect right to act in the transfer of real estate until you are twenty-one. I'll stake my life that there is a wrong somewhere."

"I feel that there is."

"I am sure of it, and when we reach San Francisco we will search it out, for the truth must be hidden there somewhere."

"No—no, not for the world!" she exclaimed.

"Why not, pray?"

"I had rather pass the remainder of my days in this bleak and howling wilderness than to ever run the risk of falling into his hands again. No, let us remain here until he gives up the search."

"Search! Do you think he will search for you?"

"Most assuredly. He will obtain assistance, and follow the Indians across the continent rather than give me up, that I am confident of."

"But we cannot remain here long."

"Better death here than life with him. He will employ scouts and send them in every direction to prevent my escape back to New York."

"Why New York?"

"Because mama learned, only a day or two before we started, that there was an old man living in Jersey City who was with my father in California, and it was this discovery which prompted him to make haste in consummating his projects."

"Good! But first let us, by some roundabout way, reach the railroad again, and you may rely upon my more than friendship to protect you."

"Anything, so long as I escape him. Blessings on those savage Indians!" she murmured, fervently.

By this time Benton had finished dressing and cooking a portion of the rabbit over the glowing coals, and they both partook heartily of it—never meal tasting so well to either of them before—and after conversing awhile longer, Benton made as soft a bed as he could out of what hay there was yet left from the fire, and taking up a position near by, revolver in hand, he attempted the difficult task of sleeping and keeping awake at the same time.

CHAPTER IX.

TAKING DESPERATE CHANCES.

DAYLIGHT came at length, and while his companion slept, Benton stole out to the mouth of the cave to see what promise the morning had.

The snow-storm had changed to rain during the

night, then it had cleared up and frozen deep, making a strong crust over which they might walk as well as over a sidewalk in New York. This was as good a turn of affairs as they could have asked, and he hastened back to tell her the good news.

But she was still sleeping, and so he proceeded to get some wood from the forest with which to replenish the fire that had gone almost out during the night, after which he prepared the remainder of the rabbit for their breakfast.

It was nearly an hour afterwards that Clara Stanley opened her eyes and gazed around her with an inquiring look.

"Good-morning, Miss Stanley, I trust you are well this morning," said he.

"Yes, thank you, but oh, what horrid dreams I have had!"

"Well, that is not to be wondered at, considering the great excitement you went through yesterday. But I have good news for you, my dear girl."

"Indeed; what is it, pray?"

"The storm has cleared away, and it has frozen so that the surface of the snow is as hard as stone, and we can walk on it without any difficulty whatever."

The girl looked puzzled, and he continued:

"I have been studying on our situation, and have come to the conclusion that we can reach the railroad after a walk of about two hours."

"But is there not danger of meeting Barlow?" she asked, with undisguised anxiety in her voice.

"I think not, for we take a westerly course, and he has probably pushed on after the Indians by this time, or will have done so by the time we get to the railroad. There we can hail a train, if we should not be fortunate enough to come out near a station, get on board of it, and go to San Francisco."

"Oh, but I am so fearful!"

"There is nothing to fear; I will protect you."

"But how could you against that man?"

"Well, if worst should come to worst, and you were not averse to the idea, I will marry you."

"Goodness! What is that you say?" she asked, quickly.

"Marry you, and then I become your guardian," said he, taking both her hands.

"Oh, sir! only think; we know nothing of each other."

"Nothing?"

"Only that you are kind, gentle and brave," she said, glancing up into his face.

"Those qualities generally satisfy your sex."

"True—true, and they satisfy me. But you know nothing of me."

"I know that you are beautiful and brave, and I believe you to be all that we accord to angels."

"Ah! I am far from an angel. But I will go with you to San Francisco, and if we can avoid him, well and good, we will bide our time and return to New York. If he finds me out and attempts to regain me, why, I will either marry you or fly with you anywhere under the sun of Heaven."

"Good! I accept the offer," said he, with much enthusiasm, and then he proceeded to prepare breakfast.

In an hour afterwards they left the cave, and getting the bearings from the morning sun, they set out over the crusted snow in hopes of coming upon the Pacific railroad.

The walking was really fine, and the crisp morning air, together with the hopes that both had, made time and distance pass rapidly, and before they were really aware of it, they came out upon the railroad track.

They stood for a moment congratulating each other on the happy commencement of their journey's renewal, when Benton suddenly discovered

in the distance, five or six miles away, the steam and the smoke of a coming train.

"Oh—oh! If we could only stop that train we should be all right, and the next station may be miles away. Oh, for a red flag to signal with!"

"A red flag!"

"Yes, that is the only color that will stop a train. Have you anything that is red?" he asked excitedly.

"Yes, wait a moment," and she ran behind a clump of trees, from which she quickly returned, bearing in her hand her red petticoat.

"Here!" said she, offering it to him.

Benton started back in surprise.

"Quick!" said she.

"Brave girl! You are indeed a heroine," said he, as he proceeded to break off a long, dead limb.

Attaching the red petticoat to the end of it, he went down upon the track and began waving it back and forth across the track. The train had by this time approached within a quarter of a mile. Would it heed the signal?

"Yes. The two powerful engines that were pulling the train blew whistles for close brakes, and the engines came to a stand still after passing a few feet beyond where the anxious couple stood.

The news of the attacking of the train by the Indians the day before had been telegraphed everywhere, and fifty armed men leaped to their feet when this train drew up, not knowing but that the savages were at the bottom of the affair!

But Benton soon explained it to the conductor, and the train was again put in motion, and Clara was shown to the dressing-room of one of the palace cars, where she adjusted her danger signal to its proper place.

The young couple speedily became heroes on board the train, and each was plied with questions innumerable by almost everybody, regarding the affair.

"They say that Allan Pinkerton was taken prisoner," said the conductor.

"Pinkerton! I guess not. As near as I could see there were only three men besides myself, and this young lady."

"That is the report from San Francisco, where a few of the passengers arrived this morning."

"The only person whom I could swear was not him, was an old man," said Benton.

"Ah, that was Al. He was on a lay of some sort, and that was one of his disguises. I've seen him wear it often," said the conductor.

George Benton felt his heart plunge towards his mouth. Could it be possible that the detective had followed him all this distance in different disguises! And for what? because he was suspected of being the murderer, or was he wanted as a witness?

Instantly his mind was made up. He would take a Pacific Mail steamer and go to China—anywhere to be rid of this terrible cloud, and he resolved to take Clara Stanley with him.

On arriving at San Francisco, going from a dreary winter scene to a land of verdure and flowers, Benton at once was driven to a hotel where apartments were secured, and the rest taken which they so much needed.

His next move was to get a portion of his bonds changed to gold, after which he purchased two tickets for Yokohama, Japan, in a steamer which was to sail the next day at noon.

Miss Stanley had quite a lot of shopping to do before she was ready, and while she was doing this, Benton was getting their luggage on board, having obtained it from the luggage master on the day before.

In the meantime, the papers were publishing extras every hour, the last one of which gave a

graphic account of the rescue of the prisoners by a band of hardy hunters, who were headed by an old man named Barlow.

Then he understood it all, and having made arrangements to meet Miss Stanley on board the steamer at half-past eleven, he resolved to show her the danger she was in, and while mentioning nothing regarding himself, to insure her for a willing companion in his wanderings.

But the train which reached San Francisco at eleven brought both Pinkerton and Barlow, the former of whom had been pretty roughly handled by the Indians, having lost his disguise entirely, and so his first move on reaching the city was to go and buy some more.

And while doing this he came upon Clara Stanley; she did not see him, but he saw her and knew that both she and young Benton had escaped with safety.

"I'll just follow her and then I shall know where to find my man, which is a good thing to do, seeing all that I have passed through, and know where to find Barlow. What! She is going toward the steamship dock. Can it be possible that he is going away in one of them? This must not be, no—no. But I have no time to procure a warrant. I must go on board and take him off by main force. Ah! She has ordered a carriage. Confound it, where can I get one? Dear—dear! No time to telegraph back to New York—. Here, cabby, follow that carriage and catch up with it if possible."

This was impossible, and it was not until after Miss Stanley had joined Benton on the main deck that Pinkerton arrived, and while he was paying the fare the last signal was given and stout hands began to withdraw the gang plank.

A quick glance showed him his man, and an equally quick glance showed Benton his old enemy.

Pinkerton flew up stairs. Benton drew and cocked his revolver, resolved to die or kill the detective rather than be taken back.

The moment they met on deck each advanced towards the other with cocked revolvers.

"Surrender!" said Pinkerton.

"Never!" replied Benton.

"Then I'll fire!"

"I'll be as quick as you can be."

"You will!" hissed the detective, and just as they both fired Clara Stanley caught their arms, throwing them up and allowing the pistols to explode in the air.

The next moment both parties were seized by the officers and disarmed, before stopping to hear any explanation.

And just as the huge steamship began to move away from her wharf, Rodney Barlow came running towards it in hot haste.

He had tracked the runaways since his arrival, and had come in sight just in time to see Clara prevent bloodshed.

"Stop her—stop her!" he yelled, or rather moaned, with all the breath he had left, "stop her!"

"Better take the next boat, ole man," said a hoodlum who was standing near.

"Stop that steamer! I'll give a thousand in gold to get on board!"

"Buy a hull steamer for that, ole hoss," put in the hoodlum.

The old rascal took no notice of the guying, but continued waving his handkerchief, and beckoning the steamship back.

All in vain, however, and he stood there like one in a dream until the ship was out of sight beyond the Golden Horn.

CHAPTER X.

OUT ON THE BROAD PACIFIC.

FOR the first time in his life Allan Pinkerton

found himself a prisoner. Meanwhile the steamer, the *Java*, was plowing her way onward out of the harbor of San Francisco, through the Golden Gate, and out towards the broad expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

Both Pinkerton and George Benton were prisoners, locked into separate rooms and left to their own curious reflections. The officer of the *Java* had regarded it from the first as simply an attempt at murder by two rivals, the cause of which was the beautiful girl, who had, by her boldness and energy, succeeded in preventing the shedding of blood when they came together.

As for Clara Stanley, she was left to the solitude of her state-room, tormented with many doubts and fears. What did this strange and unexpected meeting mean? Who was this strange man, and why did Benton seem so well prepared and so ready to meet him?

She sent the stewardess for the captain, and he presently came to her state-room.

"What can I do for you, miss?" he asked.

"Assist me, will you?" said she, pathetically.

"If I can do so, command me. What is it?" he asked in a most gentlemanly tone.

"George Benton."

"Who is he?"

"My friend."

"*Our friend?*" he asked, with a half sneer.

"Yes; oh, sir, he is simply that and nothing more," said she, earnestly.

"But who is the other man with whom he was in deadly combat when my officer arrested them?"

"I do not know. I never saw him before."

"Never saw him?"

"Never to my knowledge."

"That is strange," mused the captain.

"And it is this very strangeness that I wish you to find out for me. I am miserable—most miserable," said she, bursting into tears.

"And this young man, Benton?"

"Oh, he has been such a friend to me! We were both taken prisoners by the Indians who threw the train off the track—"

"On the Union Pacific?"

"Yes."

"I heard about that," said he, thoughtfully.

"It was a dreadful thing. Well, he and I were bound together among the prisoners which they took from the train and marched toward their village. As fate would have it, they got drunk on some brandy which they stole from the train, and by artifice and bravery we escaped, reached the railroad, and without further accident reached San Francisco."

"But what then?"

"How?"

"Were you strangers until then?"

"We were. I was in the company of a wretch at the time, and being dragged to San Francisco to consummate a hated marriage with him. The young man has been my friend, and persuaded me to go around the world and back to New York with him, where I shall find friends, rather than submit to a marriage that would make me incessantly unhappy all my life."

"So—so, there's a romance here," mused the captain.

"Call it what you like; I am convinced that this young man is my friend, and that he is perfectly honorable," said she.

"That much is a great deal, my child."

"Well, that much I am convinced of. But about this shooting affair I know nothing, and if you are disposed to be a friend to a friendless girl, I ask you to find out all about it for me; will you?"

"I will do my best, depend upon it. There is some mystery here, that I am sure of."

"It must be so, and it is that which makes me

so unhappy now. Solve it for me, captain, will you?" she asked, coming towards him with all the innocence and trustfulness of a child.

"I will. Leave it all to me, and make yourself as comfortable as you can in the meantime," said he, with much sympathy.

Turning, he went from the cabin, and left the anxious girl much more hopeful and calm than he had found her.

As he came on deck one of the officers approached him, with a salute.

"One of those fellows whom we separated while shooting at each other, is very anxious to speak with you."

"Which one is it?"

"The elder one."

"The very one I wished to see. Where is he?"

"In No. 70. I will show you to him, for I have the key to the room."

"All right; lead on."

The junior officer led the way, and the captain was soon inside of the cabin, where Pinkerton was walking up and down like a caged lion.

"You wished to see me?" said the captain.

"Are you the captain?"

"I am."

"Can I see you alone?"

"Certainly; leave us, Mr. Wallace," said he, turning to his officer, who bowed and retired.

"Allow me to close this door," said Pinkerton, going towards it.

"As you like," said the captain, calmly, for being a man to whom fear was unknown, he never hesitated under any circumstances.

The baffled detective drew it quickly together, and then moved quickly towards the captain.

"You do not recognize me?"

"Well, without being certain that I ever met you before, I somehow feel that we are not entirely strangers," said the captain, calmly surveying him.

"Here, moments are as precious as diamonds; I am Allan Pinkerton, the detective!"

"You are?" asked the captain, starting up.

"Yes, but I give it to you in secrecy."

"But what is the trouble between you and the young man?"

"I have followed him from New York."

"From New York?"

"Yes, but a curious combination of circumstances has prevented me from arresting him."

"Have you a warrant for his arrest?" asked the captain, with some significance.

"No, but I am sure of my man."

"You are?"

"Yes. He murdered a girl in New York."

"Are you sure?"

"As sure as circumstantial evidence can make a person; and now if you are a friend to justice, I ask you to put back, or in some way assist me to return with my prisoner."

"And you have no warrant?"

"None, as I told you."

"No more than you had in the *Alta Vela* case," said the captain, with a sneer.

Pinkerton started and looked at the captain.

"You remember that case, I presume?"

"Yes—do you?"

"I should say so. The prisoner was my cousin, and I loved him as well as I loved my brothers. You followed him on board one of these steamships without a warrant, as you are now, and by your statement persuaded the party to put back and land you and your prisoner. The prisoner was only suspected, as this one is. He was innocent, as this one may be. The breaking of that voyage kept him from a fortune. He became a maniac in consequence, and your zeal in what you thought right, or, rather, your ambition for reputation in your profession as detective hurried

you on until the poor boy was ruined. You seemed to have a clear case against him; perhaps you believed it. God grant you did; but after all the ruin had been wrought, he was found to be innocent."

"But I apologized."

"Apologized! What was apology in the face of the ruin of a young and promising youth? Better had it been if you had shot him dead, and then poured your apologies into his stiffened ear."

"But in this case——"

"It may be different, and it may be the same. You have no warrant to show me, and I am not bound to respect your suspicion, even though you are a celebrated detective. By this time I am out of the jurisdiction of the United States, and I refuse to listen to your appeal," said he, starting towards the door.

"But only think of it, captain."

"I do think of it, and I also think of the case of my beloved cousin."

"But think of me, then."

"In what respect?"

"You are taking me across the trackless ocean, away from my business."

"That I cannot help, any more than I can feel myself to blame for your coming on board. You took your chances and you must take them hereafter. I shall liberate the young man, and remember, he is a free man while on board this vessel. Dare to lay your hands on him unlawfully, and I will make a prisoner of you for the rest of the trip. Do you understand?"

"I do; I put down my hands, captain. Say nothing about it, and I will take my chances hereafter. It is a mixed up case. I may be right and I may be wrong. Say nothing about it, and let me work it out in my own way."

"I will do so; only remember, that while you are on board my vessel, he is just as free as you are, and must not be molested."

"I agree to it."

"Then you are at liberty to mingle with the passengers and go where you like. Good-day."

The captain left the room and went on deck. His first movement was to liberate George Benton and to restore him to Miss Stanley, who welcomed him with all the ardor of one who has been kept from the object of her supremest affection.

Pinkerton was crushed. He had acquiesced with the captain's decree, knowing that there was no escaping the fate which had overtaken him. But it was the most terrible that had ever encompassed him in his professional career. Here he was on board of a steamship, bound for Yokohama, Japan, thousands of miles away; outside of all home jurisdiction, with a man whom he felt sure was guilty of murder, and yet whom he was powerless to arrest, and no way left but for him to continue on and return again, vanquished and crestfallen, to acknowledge that he had been beaten—he, the great detective.

He passed up and down in the room, and every now and then glanced out of the little round window upon the bounding expanse of billow which now filled all space, as far as his vision could reach.

After fretting a few moments, he left the room where he had been imprisoned and rebuffed, and went on deck. By this time the distant shore and tall mountains of California were fading from view, and evening was creeping with her somber wings down upon the undulating sea.

There was no such thing as returning, and as the great detective gazed around and back upon the fading landscape, his bold heart almost sank within him.

It was a terrible situation. What would be the end of it?

Night slowly crept on, and soon the lights were ablaze in the cabin and gleamed from the spars aloft and below. He saw George Benton and Clara Stanley walking arm in arm along the promenade deck, and yet he was powerless and obliged to slink into the shadow to avoid notice. Benton was perhaps even then explaining the matter to his companion, and she was evidently taking sides with him against the detective.

"If I could only disable the machinery of the steamer, so that she would have to put back," said he, in a whisper, "then I might triumph after all. It is a bold undertaking, but it is one worthy of my craft. Why should I not try it? At all events, it is a chance against these complications, and, even though it should fail, it will not leave me in a worse position than I was in. I will attempt it," said he, turning from the deck and directing his steps towards the engine-room.

CHAPTER XI.

PINKERTON TAKES A DESPERATE CHANCE.

PINKERTON started for the engine-room. He paused a moment at the head of the stairs, and glanced back at Benton and Miss Stanley, who were still walking backward and forward on the upper deck.

He had been watching them closely for the past fifteen minutes, but not a look from either of them did he note that would have indicated that they knew of his presence.

But George Benton, while explaining matters to his new-found friend and companion, had not lost sight of Pinkerton for a moment after he came on deck. He now regarded him as an open and avowed enemy—a pursuer; and, knowing his own innocence and the damage that such a shadowing of his footsteps might inflict upon his prospects with Clara Stanley, he suddenly learned to hate him with the entire intensity of his nature.

Seeing that he had gone below, and as the night was coming on damp and foggy, Benton escorted the young lady to her state-room, bade her good-night, and agreed to see her the next morning.

"But you will not thrust yourself into danger with this man again?" she said, as she offered him her hand, standing in her state-room door.

"For your sake, Clara, I will not jeopardize my life again," said he.

"Thanks. Good-night."

"Good-night."

They parted at the state-room door, and Benton waited only a moment before hurrying to his own state-room, where he quickly changed his appearance with a change of clothing, and then followed in the direction taken by the detective.

What it was that hurried him along he could not tell, but surely there was something that urged him on in spite of all that he could do. But on board so large a ship as the *Java*, it is almost as easy to lose a person as it is in a large city.

George Benton found it so as he started in pursuit of Detective Pinkerton.

Here and there were passengers, some reading, some asleep in their chairs, some muttering prayers for safety on the voyage, some gliding here and there, but not a sight could he catch of the wily detective. Had he again changed his appearance? This seemed to be out of the question, for he must have come on board without any preparation. Where, then, was he?

While Benton is conducting his search, let us follow Pinkerton and note his desperate resolve.

An idea had struck him that if he could only disable the ship's machinery in some way, he might yet triumph, and oblige the vessel to return to San Francisco.

With this design in his head, and a heart bold enough to carry it out to any extent, he made his way to the engine-room. There he found the engineer and several of his assistants standing around, and while he assumed to be only a curious passenger, desirous of seeing the working of the machinery, he did not fail to note that there was no chance for making any attempt there.

Finally he got into conversation with one of the assistants, who carefully explained to him the working of the machinery, together with its vital and essential parts.

One of these was the condenser, and after learning how vital it was to the working of the engine, he gave it his undivided attention. He possessed a general idea of steam engineering, and this, with his gift of conversation, and faculty of making himself agreeable, so won upon the engineer that he readily opened his heart to him, and besides imparting to him all his information, he extended to him his friendship and his confidence.

In the course of an hour he had got upon such good terms with the engineer that he went about the lower part of the vessel and through the machinery rooms entirely unquestioned.

All the while his eyes were fixed on the condenser, and his mind at work on the problem of how he could disable it, for he had already learned that should it become broken or get badly out of order, that there was no means on board of repairing it, and that the ship would either have to proceed on and finish her trip under sail, or put back to San Francisco, the latter being the most probable, seeing that they were only a few miles away.

Being left alone now by the engineer, who had been called to duty, he roamed around without any one to question or dispute him. So absorbed was his whole being in the work before him, that he did not notice the figure of George Benton, who had at length got upon his track, following him through the machinery rooms, but keeping well out of sight in convenient hiding-places.

A desperate resolve had taken possession of the detective's heart.

Benton having wrought up to a pitch quite equal to that which agitated Pinkerton, seemed to understand that he premeditated something rash, and so kept a close watch upon him.

Naturally he was calm and quite averse to excitement or desperation of any sort, but once being aroused as he had so lately been, he feared no danger, and would even court it, in order to vanquish an enemy.

Pinkerton stood near the condenser.

As the piston-rod plunged down into the huge cylinder, he noticed how close the cross-bar came to the head; not more than an inch intervened.

"That cylinder head is not very thick, so the engineer tells me, and if I could only find something to place beneath that descending cross-bar, something that was strong enough to resist the downward plunge and cause it to break, then my point would surely be gained."

He glanced cautiously around to see if he could get eyes on anything to serve his purpose. He could see nothing.

Perplexed, he sauntered into the fire-room. There he found a dozen men, straggled to the wall, smoking and glistening in the lurid glow of the red hot furnaces they were shoveling coal into. They seemed like mops of inferno as they silently and impatiently fed the glowing monsters that glared and panted beneath the boilers.

He watched them some time in silence, then spoke to one of them, an Englishman. Representing himself as one of the officers of the ship,

he soon commanded the fellow's entire confidence and respect.

After asking about things in a general way, he spoke about the quality of the coal, although all the while his eyes were roving about the fire-room in search of something that would serve him.

"The coal be very bad this trip, sir," said the stoker.

"In what respect?" asked Pinkerton, in a cool and perfectly confident way.

"It be full of slate and iron, sir."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir. Look at that lump," said the man, taking up a lump larger than his head. "It be almost solid iron."

"Is that so?" said he, taking the heavy lump from the man, it being nearly as much as he could lift.

"Yea, an' we have throwed overboard larger ones."

"I will take this up to the captain," said Pinkerton, withdrawing from the room, and taking the lump with him.

"Ah, this is just what I wanted!" said he, in a hoarse whisper. "This will enable me to break the head of the cylinder. Hark—it must be nearly midnight by this time. Everybody on board is abed, and the officers below are dozing at their posts. If I break the engine I shall be suspected, of course, for the fireman will remember me; but I'll take any chance rather than be taken to Japan and back."

He concealed the huge lump under his coat the best he could, and slowly walked towards the condenser. Benton was watching him with great anxiety from behind a water-tank, but could not make out what he was doing, or what he intended to do. He appeared to act like one bereft of his senses.

But he did not remove his eyes from him for a moment. Stealing cautiously along, the detective looked carefully around, and then taking the huge lump from under his coat, he placed it upon the head of the cylinder, just where the cross-bar would strike it when it came down, and then darted back into the shadow.

Down came the ponderous piston and cross-bars. It struck the lump of coal and iron, crushing it as if it had been only so much charcoal. In fact, it scarcely gave the machinery a jar that would attract notice.

"Curses on the luck!" hissed Pinkerton, as he saw that his hopes were crushed with the coal.

Even then Benton did not understand what he was trying to do, and this only convinced him the more that the detective had gone crazy.

But still he watched him.

Going back to the fire-room, he saw one of the firemen breaking up the large lumps of coal with a big sledge hammer. He noted him carefully for a few moments, and when he had finished and placed the sledge in one corner of the fire-room, he approached and took it.

"I want this for a few moments," said he, going from the room with it.

A gleam of triumph lighted up his face that was fiendish in the extreme. This aroused Benton, and for the first time convinced him that the detective meditated mischief; that he evidently intended to disable the machinery in some way.

His first impulse was to alarm the officers of the ship. His next idea was to thwart the man himself, and in that way obtain a power over him.

Stealing along behind him, dodging this way and that to avoid being seen, he at length came to within a few feet of where he stood, holding the big sledge in his hand, and peering away into

the darkness at the stern as though he expected to see some one spring upon him.

"Pshaw!" he heard him utter. "This will do the business for me," and then he lifted the sledge as the stout cross-bar went up, and placed it squarely beneath it upon the head of the cylinder.

It began to descend. In another instant the mischief would be accomplished. Benton saw it all, and darting forward, he pulled the iron head of the sledge hammer away just in time to save the cylinder.

The two men confronted each other.

"Give me that sledge!" said Pinkerton.

"No, sir; not without you are strong enough to take it from me," said Benton, resolutely. "I have been watching you."

"You have?"

"Yes; and I have seen your attempt to disable this machinery."

"It is false!" replied Pinkerton, somewhat abashed.

"I'll swear to it!"

"And I'll swear to the contrary; yes, I'll even swear that you did it yourself."

"It would not be believed."

"I guess the word of Allan Pinkerton would be taken sooner than the murderer of Maud Wagner," said the detective, with a sneer.

"You are a liar!"

"Indeed! We'll see. You have foiled me long enough. I will begin with you right here, and never let up until I see you dangling from the cross-beam of a gallows."

"You are a fool!"

"We shall see. In the first place, I will begin with you right here, by denouncing you as caught in the act of attempting to destroy the machinery."

"Me?"

"Yes, you!"

"But I shall object to that," said a voice behind them, and turning, they saw the assistant engineer.

"You here?" asked Pinkerton, in surprise.

"Yes, I have been watching you, and should have shot you on the spot, had I not seen this young man foil your game. You see my pistol," he added, showing the pistol that he still held in his hand.

Pinkerton was completely taken aback.

"What your object was I could not at first make out, but your conversation makes everything plain. You are a detective; the one who had the shooting with this same young man as we were leaving the dock at San Francisco, and your object now was to disable our machinery so that we should be obliged to return. But your little game is spoiled, and I now arrest you, and will put you where you can do no further harm."

"Arrest me?" asked Pinkerton, in astonishment.

In reply, the engineer blew a whistle, and instantly half a dozen stalwart seamen responded.

"Take this man to the fore-castle, and confine him."

"But will you not allow me to see the captain?"

"No; in mercy I will not, for had he been in my place, he would have fed the sharks with you. Take him away."

The seamen placed their iron-like hands upon him, and in spite of his bold struggle, they bore him to a strong room in the fore-castle, where he was securely fastened in.

This was luck, indeed, for the bold detective. Never in the whole course of his long service and experience had he met with like treatment.

But it was all his own fault. He had been baffled by a series of mishaps ever since leaving

New York, and they had culminated now, and he was a prisoner.

Where would it end?

George Benton went with the engineer to report the affair to the captain, who was greatly enraged at the cowardly attempt, and resolved to keep him imprisoned until they reached Yokohama, and there leave him unless he paid both his passage out and back as the price of being able to return.

It was long after midnight when Benton sought his state-room. The night was dark and damp, and not a solitary star gleamed from the Heavens to cheer the noble vessel on her way across the trackless sea. There was scarcely a person up, save these whose sea-sickness or nervousness prevented them from sleeping, and it was with a feeling of much relief that the young man found himself shut in alone.

What a day—what a week of excitement it had been to him. How strangely events had shaped themselves, and how they had clung around him.

Partially disrobed, he sat down, and lighting a cigar, he began to smoke and ruminate upon what had passed, and it was more than an hour before sleep wooed him to his ready couch.

The next morning broke bright and beautiful. Benton and Clara met, and escorting her to breakfast, related the strange adventure of the night before, and in the connection gave her, as he made up his mind to do, the whole history of the affair—why he left New York and what for.

She took his part, of course; but she at the same time urged him to return to New York, and not only free himself from all suspicion, but assist in bringing the murderer to justice.

This was the principal subject of their conversation for many days thereafter, during which he found her to be even more lovely and accomplished than he had imagined, and while he felt himself drawn to her by an irresistible power, he also felt that she was far from being indifferent regarding him.

Day after day wore on while out on the bosom of the vasty deep, and each one saw the cords between them grow stronger and stronger. They sat apart, walked apart from the other passengers, and together drank in the beauties of the grand and terrible old ocean on which they were tossed like a dancing feather.

All this time Pinkerton was kept in close confinement. At first he chafed and fretted like a caged bird, but his philosophy came to his aid at last, and by the assistance of a few luxuries which he was enabled to purchase of the assistant steward, he managed to get along very well, and during the time he had his future moves all mapped out.

At length one bright morning the land of Japan came in sight, and by noon the quaint old city of Yokohama could plainly be seen from the deck of the trusty steamer that had borne them in safety from the shores of the new world to those of the old.

CHAPTER XII.

ARRIVAL AT YOKOHAMA.

THE harbor of Yokohama, Japan, is one of the most picturesque and beautiful in Asia, if not in the whole world, but the pen of the most poetic observer would fail to convey to the reader an intelligent idea of its landscape beauties.

Those who have followed the strange fate of our principal characters up to the present time will readily understand the situation, remembering the untoward fortune which undertook Pinkerton, the detective, who had chased George Benton thus far around the world, without being able to arrest him, and who was himself a prisoner on board the *Java*, having been arrested for at-

tempting to disable the machinery, so as to compel the steamer to put back to San Francisco.

During the remainder of the voyage, after the dramatic events which culminated in Pinkerton's arrest, everything went smooth, and young Benton and Clara Stanley became the best of friends, and together mapped out their future, while the detective was also mapping out his future moves.

"It is no use," he mused, as one of the crew informed him that they were entering the harbor of Yokohama. "Fate has been against me in this business, and I must go slow. This young Benton is a deep one, and has managed to get me at a disadvantage. And here we are in Japan. There is no extradition law existing between this country and the United States, and once here he is safe. But I'll be hanged if I give it up so. He is without doubt the murderer of Maude Wagner, and what is more, he knows that I am on his track. But he will not remain here long, in all probability, and if I can only manage to make him believe that I have given up the chase and returned to the United States, he will undoubtedly continue on until he reaches some country with whom we have an extradition treaty; then I can nab him. I must get out of this mess, and with another disguise get upon his track again. But I must have more money. He seems to be well supplied, and I must also be. I'll telegraph back to Chicago and get a telegraphed order for a thousand pounds sent to me here. Yes—yes."

While he was indulging in these cogitations, the steamer had slowly made her way past the forts and through the narrow entrance, and was now nearing the wharf. But Pinkerton was all the while a prisoner, and could see nothing of the beauties which were charming the other passengers, and it was fully two hours after the others had disembarked before he was allowed to communicate with the captain, although he had sent him several messages urging an interview.

"You can now go ashore, Pinkerton, but you will have to remain here or pay a double fare back," said the captain.

"Very well, I accept the terms; only allow me to go ashore."

"You do not deserve it, and I will not swear that the company will not prosecute you on your arrival in the States."

"I'll take the chances, captain; only let me get ashore. But tell me, do you know which way this fellow, Benton, went?"

"I do not; but if I did I should not tell you," replied the captain, sharply.

"Very well. But you are making a great mistake, captain, and some day you will find it out. That young man is a murderer, and when I have tracked him to justice you will then give me credit and be sorry for what you have done."

"Perhaps; I am always ready to do justice."

"That is all any man can ask. Leave it there, and await future developments. I am now at liberty to go ashore, am I not?"

"You are," said the captain, coldly, turning away and leaving the detective to follow his own inclinations once more.

In the meantime Benton and Miss Stanley had gone ashore and taken up their abode at the American Hotel, about half a mile from the landing, and afterwards purchased tickets for Hong Kong, China, for the steamer which left two days after the arrival of the *Java* at Yokohama. This being arranged, they hired a carriage and a guide and were driven about this ancient and most beautiful city, of which they had both read so much but never expected to see.

Pinkerton at once made preparations to go ashore, and the first thing he did was to tele-

graph to his agents in Chicago, by the way of India, Suez, and England, and the Atlantic cable company, for money, but without giving any particulars regarding his strange case, feeling that they would know all about it and govern themselves accordingly. He did not even ask for information, believing that he was surely on the right track, and he knew that his friends would only look for him back again when he had taken his man and won the victory, even if he had to go around the world to do so.

While waiting for a reply he went to a store and procured a new and ingenious disguise in which he could appear as a substantial Englishman, traveling either for business or pleasure, and then going to the American Hotel, where he naturally suspected Benton would go, he found his name upon the register, and also learned that he had gone out with Miss Stanley, to see the wonders of the ancient capital.

This fortunate turn in affairs gave him ample time to receive his money order by telegraph, and to dress himself in his new disguise.

That evening he met Benton at the supper table, the hotel being very much like an American one, and sitting directly opposite to him he convinced himself that the disguise was perfect, for although conversing with both Benton and Miss Stanley, neither of them appeared to suspect for a moment that they were conversing with Pinkerton, the detective.

"Beg pardon, but are you English?" asked Pinkerton, while conversing with them at the table.

"No, we are Americans," said Benton.

"Ah, just arrived?"

"Only just now from San Francisco."

"Ah, indeed; which way are you going?"

"Right through to England."

"To England?"

"Yea. We are simply traveling around the world for pleasure," said Benton.

"Good! I am going home to England myself, and perhaps we may be in each other's company."

"Perhaps."

"I take the steamer to Hong Kong tomorrow."

"Indeed! So do we."

"That is fortunate, let me trust, for we shall at least be *compagnons du voyage*."

"Which I trust will be a pleasure to us all."

"Thanks. I trust so too."

The conversation was continued for some time, during which Pinkerton drew Benton out to his heart's content, and calmly made up his mind what to do in his case.

"The cheek of the fellow surpasses anything I ever encountered," he mused. "I did think I would get an extradition warrant for his arrest when we arrived in Hong Kong, where England rules, but if what he says is true, there is no occasion for it. All I have to do is to follow along to London, and if he does not stop there, to bear him company back to the United States, where I can take him at my leisure. Well—well, this is one of the most curious murder cases that I ever became acquainted with. One thing I am sorry for, that I failed to take old Rodney Barrow. Poor devil! I wonder what he is doing now! But he will undoubtedly follow in the next steamer, for there is something connected with this girl that chains him to her with more than usual interest, and I know him well enough to be sure that he will follow, even back to New York. I'll leave a trail for him, that I will!" he added, with a tone of exultation.

Pinkerton was now happy, for he had his game "dead to rights," and the prospect of the trip around the world, seeing that he could not help himself, was not greatly against his inclinations.

and so he concluded to make as much of it as he possibly could.

With this idea in view he went out to see the city that evening. George Benton took his lady companion to a Japanese theater, where they enjoyed the evening's entertainments, and after they had returned he took a stroll out to see the strange city by night, he also having a desire to see what the city looked like in an artificial light.

To our readers it may be very entertaining to follow both of our characters, and describe what they saw, but to do so would occupy more space than would be fair to those who simply wish to hurry on with the principal characters; to see how this strange drama is to eventuate, and who do not care for side issues, and a description of the country through which they are passing.

With this idea in view we will simply state that Pinkerton went out and "took in" one or two second rate theaters, and afterwards visited a cheap hotel near the steamship landing, where the patrons were supposed to be cosmopolitan; that is, where all nationalities put up, and where all kinds of people were supposed to be at home.

He ordered a bottle of wine, and sat down to "take in" the people who were assembled there. There were representatives from nearly every nation under the sun, but the largest number seemed to be Japanese, a large proportion of whom were sailors and longshoremen, a peculiar class in Yokohama, half-honest, half-dishonest; half-laborers, half-pirates.

The strange events that had followed Pinkerton and "his man" since leaving New York were quite enough to engage his thoughts, and while he sat there sipping his wine, he was lost for the time being to everything else. It was one of the most sensational cases that he had ever been engaged upon, and the details of it occupied his whole mind as he sat there in that strange *cafe*, in a strange land, and surrounded for the most part by a strange race of beings.

His thoughts flew on, taking in the past and the probable future, and as he sat there, a gang of Japanese, those fellows whom we have before described, were watching him. They saw at a glance that he had money, and true to their instincts, they resolved to possess themselves of it, even at the price of murder.

They watched him closely as he sat there over his wine and in deep meditation, and they put up a job on him, which the keen eye of the detective even failed to discover.

About one o'clock he left the table, and started out to continue his way back to the hotel, all the while confident in the arrangement he had made regarding the object of his chase.

He was walking along through one of the streets that led to the hotel, when suddenly he was pounced upon by half a dozen Japanese land pirates, and before he could draw his revolver he was knocked prone to the earth, and the rascals were about going through him, when George Benton, who chanced to be passing in the neighborhood, sprang to the rescue, and drawing his revolver, dealt death and consternation to the vile rascals who were about to overpower Pinkerton.

"Black, you devils!" he cried, dashing among them.

With curses muttered in a strange tongue, the robbers fled, leaving Pinkerton unharmed, and in the hands of the man he was chasing around the world. What a situation!

"Have they harmed you, sir?"

"Not thanks to you. But you were just in

"How well, thank you! But I suppose I am

not mistaken—you are the English gentleman whom I met at the American Hotel?"

"The very same. And you—"

"I have been out to see the sights. And you?"

"I have also been out for the same purpose."

"And we met most opportunely."

"It would seem so. Are you going to the hotel?"

"Yes. Let us go on together."

"Thanks."

The two men accompanied each other back to the hotel, where they soon after separated for the night, but with a promise to meet the next day previous to going on board the steamer for Hong Kong.

The feelings which took possession of Pinkerton, the detective, can better be imagined than described. There he was, disguised beyond a possibility of detection, and yet owing his life to the young man whose life and liberty he sought. What a position for a man who owned to the impulses of a gentleman?

But with Pinkerton, everything was business. He had a reputation to sustain, and to keep that good he would sacrifice his own brother even. He was at the head of a great detective firm; in spite of all sentiment, in spite of all appreciation, he must carry his point, and take the murderer of Maude Wagner back to New York, even though he might owe his life to the person suspected.

But the next day they were early on board the steamer for Hong Kong, and without being suspected, Pinkerton accompanied them, still in his disguise of a fine old English traveler, and by the time the steamer was ready to sail, George Benton had been so completely deceived that he never suspected that a game was being played upon him, and that his newly-found English friend was indeed the detective, Pinkerton.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM YOKOHAMA TO HONG KONG.

It is but a little thing to say, "from Yokohama to Hong Kong," but how great a stretch of land and sea it is when brought face to face with it. Think of two thousand miles, through the Japanese Sea; Yellow Sea; past beautiful islands by the hundred, chief among which is the famous fairy land, the Island of Formosa, and some of the most wonderfully lovely landscapes on which the sun of Heaven ever shone.

In the best of weather the sailing time between these two great points is something over five days, and fortunate is the ship that makes the trip all unharmed by the sudden squalls and irresistible tornadoes which are continually sweeping over the Tropic of Cancer and among the Japanese Islands.

The voyage proved equal to the best until within a few miles of Formosa, when one of those terrible cyclones, which the mariner is ever on the alert for in those waters, suddenly struck the steamer and almost drove her under the seething waters of the Yellow Sea.

The steamer was one of the stanchest ever built, and constructed especially for this route; but this storm was the severest she had ever encountered, and her officers stood trembling at their posts, doing their best, but almost hoping against hope as they saw the steamer plunging onward through the gloom, where they knew not, but still true to their trusts and the passengers in their keeping.

It was about noon when the storm first struck the *Empire*, and for three hours it was a question that her officers could not answer, whether she would survive it or not; but instead of expending itself, the storm seemed to grow wilder in every direction. The sky was so thickly overcast with

dark and threatening clouds, that the very essence of midnight seemed to reign over everything, while the lightning, terrible in its fierce whiteness, darted through the sky, affording the only light, and hissing in its intensity as the terrible thunder claps followed it and reverberated through every part of the heavens.

The waves seemed at war with each other, and piled one on top of the other until they appeared to lash the frowning clouds, while the puny steamer, laboring against the war of the elements, became only a feather to be tossed here and there at the will of a seemingly angry God.

The passengers were upon their knees, and as the struggling ship mounted each wave, and they seemed nearer to Heaven, their prayers went up with all the fervor of those who feel themselves in the jaws of death, and as she would swoop down again as though about to dash herself upon the bottom of the sea, they clung to the rigging and prayed more fervently, if possible.

George Benton and Clara Stanley were among those who feared and prayed most earnestly, while even Pinkerton, brave of heart and used to the most exciting phases of nature, trembled for his life, and for once regretted the tenacity with which he had followed the object of his chase.

Can you understand it, boys? A steamer laboring in a cyclone, thrown almost upon her beam-ends at one moment, and the next flung like a cork upon the crest of a tremendous wave that seemed like a mountain, then plunging from that height, all in the darkness, down—down, like a log over Niagara Falls.

The *Empire*, as before stated, was a stanch steamer, built especially for this service, and had she been favored with plenty of sea-room and light sufficient to have enabled her officers to know where they were, she might have escaped all great harm.

But all these conditions were denied them, and while plunging thus wildly about, as though the storm-king had taken it up for a plaything, there came a tremendous concussion, a terrific crash, and the next instant a whelming wave swept everything from the deck of the fated ship, and receding, left her high and dry on some unknown shore.

Several passengers happened to be on deck at the time, being too anxious for their safety to remain below, and among them was Pinkerton, the detective. With the others, and with everything else, he was caught up by the wave and thrown far up on the land.

But Benton and Clara were below, hoping almost against hope, and when the crash and the destroying wave came they were left unharmed, although thoroughly drenched by the flood of water which poured down the hatches. She was every inch a heroine, however, and in the face of almost certain death, she bore herself bravely, and set a grand example for the other passengers, who were shrieking, praying, and acting in the wildest manner.

But in reality the greatest danger had passed, for the wave which had thrown the *Empire* upon the shore was the largest and most powerful that had or did afterwards attack them, and consequently the ship was thrown so far inland that the succeeding waves failed to do her further damage, although she was a wreck past all help even then.

The officers and those who had been washed overboard were not seriously hurt, and but one man, one of the crew, was drowned. They recovered themselves in a short time, and stood straining their eyes and trying to peer through the Egyptian darkness to get a glimpse of the fated ship. The terrible roar of the wind, the wicked dash of the tremendous waves, was all

they could hear, while being unable to see ten feet in any direction.

Death was the only thing certain. All else was uncertainty.

They were standing within three hundred feet of the wreck, although they did not know it.

The minutes seemed hours.

Presently there was a rift in the clouds, and a gleam of light broke upon the scene.

The storm was passing to the north.

Almost as suddenly as it became dark did it become light again, and the extent of the damage was visible.

The deck was soon swarming with frightened passengers, who glared eagerly around them.

Communication was soon possible, for when the waves subsided those on shore could approach near enough to converse with those on deck.

The steamer was firmly embedded in the sands, and the rush of escaping steam could now be heard above the subsiding elements that had until now drowned the sound it made.

The captain was soon upon the slanting deck, and after a hasty observation, he concluded that they were upon the northern extremity of the Island of Formosa, one of the most beautiful spots on the whole earth, the abode of fairy land, if there is such a land, and the passengers offered prayers of thanksgiving that it was so well with them.

The steamer was badly broken, but when the waves subsided it left her high and dry, and a place of shelter at least.

The officers at once proceeded to make the passengers as much at their ease as possible under the circumstances, while a messenger was dispatched inland for help.

It was with some emotion that Pinkerton found Benton all right after the catastrophe, and the greeting between them was hearty in the extreme, he still being in the character of an English traveler.

The passengers were made quite comfortable that night, and the next morning the messenger returned with assistance in the shape of a coasting sloop that sometimes acted as a pilot boat.

With the captain of this craft the commander of the Empire made an arrangement to take the passengers and their baggage on to Hong Kong, or in the event of meeting another of the company's steamers, to transfer them to it with instructions to take them to the end of their journey.

The toil of getting the baggage and mails out of the Empire's hold and transferring them by row boats to the schooner, was even greater than the task of getting the passengers on board. But by three o'clock that day all was in readiness, and the stanch little craft proceeded on her way with bright skies and well filled sails, leaving the officers and crew behind to look after the wreck.

From the island of Formosa to Hong Kong is about five hundred miles, but the Duke, the name of the schooner, was a fast sailer, and with favoring winds was able to make ten miles an hour, and as that rate would occupy but little over two days, the passengers became reconciled to the narrow quarters afforded them, and did not appear to be over anxious to encounter another of the company's steamers.

The sail over this passage in good weather is one of the most delightful and grand that can be imagined. All down the eastern coast

of Formosa the scenes are perfectly enchanting; and as the schooner drew but little water she was enabled to run much nearer to the shore than a steamer could have done, thus allowing her passengers a chance to see the tropical beauties, and to become almost intoxicated with the odor of flowers and fruits which seemed to dwell in lazy billows upon the waiting air, wafted from the verdure crowned island.

And between Formosa and Hong Kong the scene is scarcely less beautiful and enchanting, for the Chinese Sea is filled with lovely islands, some large and others only a few acres in extent, on which an equatorial sun sheds his golden glory, ripening most luxuriant fruits, and giving color to the most magnificent flowers that ever turned their bright faces in thankfulness to Heaven.

The sail to Hong Kong was a delightful one, and at the end of the third day, after enjoying all that poets and painters have ever reveled in, the Duke glided into her wharf, and once more the passengers found themselves under the protection of the flag of brave old England, for here she has a foothold in the east that has already revolutionized Asia.

A portion of the city even seems like an English town, for about the wharves there are scores of English vessels, and from almost every masthead gleams the cross of St. George, although the Stars and Stripes of our own beloved land are often to be met with there.

George Benton and Clara Stanley, accompanied by Pinkerton, went to the St. George's Hotel, where they were speedily made at home, and where it is hard for one to believe that he is in the land of the Celestials.

The next day after their arrival, Pinkerton and Benton met in the tap-room of the hotel. In fact, the detective had not allowed him to go out of sight since landing, unless quite sure as to where he was, and what he was doing.

"Well, we are all right now," said Benton.

"Yes, thank Heaven! our experience has been a rough one. I suppose you keep right on by the next steamer to Singapore?"

"Well, I am not certain about that. When does she sail?" asked Benton.

"To-morrow."

"And when does the next one sail?"

"In one week."

"You see, my companion, Miss Stanley, has become very much exhausted by the very rough passage we have had, and I think it better for her to remain over until the next steamer, that she may get rested for a continuation of the voyage."

"There goes a week," thought the detective.

"Are you going to take the next steamer?"

"I was thinking of it, and I understand that she is a much superior steamer to the one that sails next week," said Pinkerton.

"Well, all depends upon Miss Stanley. If she feels strong enough to go, I am ready; but I must consult her, and shall favor the idea of her remaining over, even if it takes a fortnight."

"I shall be sorry to part company with you," said Pinkerton, who was playing his part admirably.

"No more so, sir, than I shall be to part company with you. But you know she must need rest."

"Yes; but the voyage to Singapore will, in all probability, be a pleasant one, and she

will experience much rest from it. Allow me to see her this evening, for I think I can persuade her that it would be better to take this steamer."

"We will meet you in the parlor after tea."

"Very well. Now join me in a bottle of wine," said Pinkerton.

"With all my heart," and seating themselves at a table, they proceeded to discuss the wine, and to talk over the sensations of the voyage from Yokohama.

At the end of half an hour they parted company.

"Confound the luck!" muttered Pinkerton, after he had been left alone. "I have a great mind to apply to the authorities and get an extradition warrant without further delay. Then I can take him right along and not bother myself with disguises any longer. By Jove! I think it would be the best way! Of course it would not be quite so pleasant as to accompany him in this way; but at least I should be quite as sure of my game, and perhaps save a month's time. At best, I shall have to change my disguise again when we reach London, for there my journey is supposed to end. Yes, I am resolved. I will see her to-night, and if I cannot persuade her to take this steamer, I will get out the papers and put the darbies on him at once. And the girl will be handy to have around, for old Barlow will be sure to find her, and that will save me a world of trouble, perhaps. Yes—yes, I am resolved."

By night his plans were all perfected, and he awaited the appointed meeting in the hotel parlor.

SECOND PART.

CHAPTER I.

FROM HONG KONG TO SINGAPORE.

THE meeting between Pinkerton, still in the disguise of a respectable English tourist, George Benton and Miss Stanley in the parlor of the St. George's Hotel that evening, resulted quite differently from what the detective had expected and prepared himself for.

Instead of wishing to remain there any length of time to rest after the fearful voyage they had had from Yokohama, she appeared in fine spirits, and anxious to continue the journey. New York seemed a whole world away from her, and she was so anxious to reach it, that the idea of fatigue never entered her mind for a moment.

And so it was arranged that they should take the steamer the next day for Singapore, and the detective concluded not to have Benton arrested, but to accompany and urge him onward until they reached the United States again. This may not seem like being chased around the world, but it was so much like it that it would be hard to point out the difference.

From Hong Kong to Singapore is about sixteen hundred miles, through the Chinese Sea, one of the most beautiful bodies of water on the face of the globe, studded as it is with a large number of islands, cropped with the most luxuriant verdure, and crowned with the most luscious fruits that ever the sun of Heaven smiled down in ripening splendor upon.

In the China Sea is situated the island of Shen Fo, the abode of a peculiar race of people, and from whence all fairies who ever visited other portions of the earth are supposed to come.

The weather being remarkably fine, the passengers remained on deck the greater portion of the time to enjoy the scenery and the perfumed breezes which came to them like the breath of Heaven.

All this was especially grateful to and was

highly prized by George Benton and Clara Stanley. When not in the company of Pinkerton, they walked or sat apart from the other passengers, and were evidently much more interested in each other than in anything else in the world.

And who can blame them if they were? for what dangers and sensations had they not shared in since their capture by the Indians while riding in the cars through Wyoming Territory? If they felt more than a common interest in each other, if they had already become lovers, in fact, there certainly was more excuse for it than the beautiful scenes and intoxicating breath which lolled upon the tropical air.

But it must be confessed that Pinkerton was greatly puzzled with watching them. He sometimes would be questioning himself regarding the probability of Benton's being the murderer of Maude Wagner after all.

How was it? how could it be possible for one so young, and evidently high born and well educated, to carry so calm a face if he really had that guilt upon his heart?

And yet what a chain of evidence he had to bring against him; how strongly circumstances pointed to him as being the murderer. Yes, he must be guilty, and this appearance of innocence which distinguished him was born of confidence in knowing or believing that he was out of all danger, and was undoubtedly used in making love to Miss Stanley, and these two things probably gave him that appearance of candor and innocence.

But what impudence—what daring he must have to continue on around the world and return to New York, the theater of his dreadful crime. The thought that he could do this, convinced the detective that he was dealing with no ordinary criminal, and so he did not allow him out of his sight whenever there was a landing made at any of the ports along the route.

On the second day out, and while Benton was in his state-room, Pinkerton found Miss Stanley on the promenade deck, where she sat waiting for her friend's return. He approached her in that hearty, bluff English way which he had adopted and was carrying out so well.

"Ah, good-morning, Miss Stanley, I trust you are well this morning!" he said, raising his hat.

"Quite well, I thank you."

The look of sadness, almost anguish, that was on her face when we first met her, had been brushed away, and now there was a glowing color in her cheeks, a light in her eye, and a ripeness in her lips which made her positively beautiful.

"I am glad to see you looking so charming this morning," said Pinkerton, taking a seat by her, "for it confirms my judgment, as you will recollect, that this trip through the China sea would be the best thing in the world for you."

"I am feeling very well indeed."

"And enjoying yourself, I trust?"

"Very much, I assure you."

"Where is our friend Benton?"

"I think he is in his room yet. But he will undoubtedly be here soon. I suppose you have often been over this route?"

"Only once before, and I know but little about it: I assure you, I am sorry that I know so little, for were it otherwise I might make myself more agreeable and useful to you. I have been but a very little out of England, and it was only very urgent business which took me so far away at this time."

"But it will be some consolation to enjoy your society when we get to England."

"Oh, yes, command me when we get there," said he, and at the same time thinking that he was greatly getting on his feet in it.

"Dear old England!" she suddenly exclaimed.

"But you are an American."

"Yes; but next to my native land I love dear old England the best, and as much in a hurry as I am to reach home, I think I shall remain a few weeks in England, or at least long enough to see some of the places of interest."

"I guess you will do nothing of the kind," thought Pinkerton, but knowing that he must keep up the part he was playing, he added: "Oh, by all means! and if, on my arrival in London, I find that I have not to go immediately to France, I shall be most happy to entertain you at my house in Grosvenor Square, and show you the lions."

"Oh, that would be so pleasant," said she.

"It would indeed, and were I not such a slave to business I could promise you certainly. But on my arrival at London, I may be obliged to go directly to Paris on matters of great moment. That, of course, would destroy the pleasure I should most certainly enjoy as your host."

"But it is a long—long way to London yet."

"You are right. Many a long thousand of miles stares us in the face yet. But when once in such good hands as you are, time and space melt away almost without our knowledge."

Clara bowed, and blushed slightly.

"Mr. Benton seems to be a very estimable young man," said Pinkerton, fixing his eyes on her.

"He is indeed. I never met a braver or more noble man in my life," she said, earnestly.

"And he appears to be so honorable, too."

"Yes, seems the very soul of honor, and yet he is as tender-hearted as a girl."

"He seems to be all that you say, and I am glad that you have found favor in each other's eyes."

Clara blushed, and made no reply.

"And he appears to be anxious to get back to New York as you are."

"Yes; he says there are certain reasons why he should be back there as speedily as possible."

"Indeed! Business, maybe?"

"Something of great importance," he says.

She knew what the business was, but, of course, was not going to give it away to a stranger.

Again was the astute detective puzzled.

He would have given a thousand dollars for news from New York. But there was only one way of doing it; he must keep going, for it was now quite as easy to finish the tour of the world as to return, being now nearly half way around it.

Young Benton soon made his appearance, and the conversation changed. He was looking fresh and hearty, for the travel was giving him a glow that he always needed, having been a close student for so long a time, and accustomed to but little out-door life.

"I have just been having a talk with the captain," said he, taking a seat close to Clara.

"Indeed! What about, pray; anything that will interest us?" asked Pinkerton.

"Well, he has given me a general idea of the various routes. We shall be in Singapore next Saturday, if nothing happens. We shall then be about one half around the world, Singapore being nine thousand miles from London."

"Nine thousand miles!" exclaimed Clara.

"Yes, and three thousand more from London to New York. Now, the question is: Shall we go by rail to Bombay, and from there by steamer across the Arabian Sea, or keep right on by steamer to Aden, and thence up the Red Sea to Suez?"

"What do you say, Mr. Parton?" asked Clara, turning to Pinkerton.

"Well, really, I had not given it much

thought," replied Pinkerton, resolved not to commit himself.

"I am in favor of going to Calcutta," said Benton.

"But is it not a great deal longer route?"

"Yes, a thousand miles further. But only think of a ride by rail through the wonderful, storied land of Hindostan. Why, it would be like viewing fairyland by modern gaslight."

"But I am told that the journey is very dangerous," said Pinkerton.

"But it will be none the less interesting on that account. I would dearly like to get a glimpse at those ancient cities and temples, older than civilization itself almost, and see the strange people of whom I have read so much. Wouldn't you, Clara?"

"I would indeed."

"Very well. Then we will go to Calcutta. But you will accompany us, will you not, Mr. Parton?" said he, turning to the detective, who by this time had become very uneasy.

"Well, I had rather not."

"Very well. Then we will part company at old Singapore," said Benton, resolutely.

"Will we, though?" mused Pinkerton.

CHAPTER II.

FROM SINGAPORE TO CALCUTTA, AND ACROSS INDIA.

It was in vain that the disappointed detective sought to dissuade them from taking the long journey from Singapore to Calcutta, a distance of nearly two thousand miles. Both Benton and his companion were anxious for a trip through the far-famed Bay of Bengal, and a journey across the wonderful land of Hindostan.

Pinkerton found on his arrival at Singapore, that the minds of the young people were made up, and as the steamer left for Calcutta two hours after the arrival of the one they were on, and there being no way whereby he could help himself, he was obliged to go in the same round-about way.

He submitted to it with the best grace he could, and by four o'clock in the afternoon they were all on board the Calcutta steamer, and making headway through the straits of Malacca.

The sail through these beautiful but treacherous straits is one of the most enjoyable imaginable. The Peninsular of Malaga, belonging to Farther India, on the north, and the Island of Sumatra on the south; past the Prince of Wales Islands out into the Mergui Archipelago, that beautiful cluster of islands (some of them like little heavens and fairy empires) which stud the coast of India like glittering pearls on the bosom of an Ethiop.

To fully describe all that they saw would go beyond the furthest limits of our story. Suffice it to say that after making five stoppages at different points along the coast, each of which gave the detective a certain amount of trouble and anxiety lest his game should somehow escape, the steamer put across the Bay of Bengal, a sea in reality, and at the end of seven days entered the harbor of Calcutta, the most important city in India, situated at the mouth of the renowned river Ganges.

The train on the Great Peninsular Railway, from Calcutta to Bombay, was all ready to start for a journey of fifteen hundred miles, and as they had been so long on shipboard, and seen so little but water, both Benton and Miss Stanley were much pleased with the change. As for Pinkerton, fortune was against him, and he had to appear to lose the change whether he did or not.

It is quite a stretch of the imagination to suppose that a cold-blooded detective would take the

least interest in the wonders and beauties of India, but it must be admitted that Pinkerton found a few grains of consolation in the thought that he was about to pass through a country of which he had read much in his younger days, both of history, romance and fable, and during the delightful trip across that great peninsula, that ancient empire, he almost forgot the hardness of his mission, and for the time being became almost a boy again.

The first day's ride took them through the wonderful valley of the Ganges, with its luxuriant verdure and its ancient cities, and at Allahabad they stopped two hours for refreshment, and after the wait the iron horse again went snorting through the tangled forests and dark jungles of India.

To those who have read the history and manners of the Hindoos, the picture of a modern locomotive plunging across their country, waking up echoes that have slept for centuries, is indeed a strange one. And yet it is a reality, and only marks the progress of modern civilization. A stout English hand guided the locomotive, and everything about the train and the railway convinces the traveler that the brain of the Anglo Saxon is capable of putting new life into the oldest countries, and grafting commerce upon the deadest land under the sun.

The steam from the engine that went tearing through these long-slumbering woods, coiled itself into graceful festoons about huge palm trees, between which appeared picturesque bungalows and wonderful temples, ornamented by the inexhaustible ornaments of Indian architecture, and then a vast stretch of plain, which reached almost out of sight, would greet the vision of the voyagers; and jungles where there were snakes, and tigers, and the haunts of elephants, who stood regarding the thundering train with pensive eye.

Now and then they caught sight of distant pagodas, and without feeling any alarm, they knew that they were in the land of the Thugs, almost every yard of whose soil contains the remains of some victim strangled and sacrificed to the Goddess of Death. These horrible people still exist, although the English government has done much toward breaking up the terrible association, as it has done much toward the civilization of all India. Of course our readers know what a wonderful country India is, and something of its extent and ancient grandeur. It may be called the oldest country on the globe, so far as religion, learning, and the arts are concerned, for of it Egypt borrowed all she knew, and yet we call her an ancient land.

India is a great reversed triangle, whose base is north and its apex south. It comprises an area of fourteen hundred thousand square miles, over which is unequally distributed a population of one hundred and eighty millions of inhabitants. It has for centuries slept in luxurious sloth; but now that England has a governing foothold there, it is beginning to awaken and resume the place among the nations of the earth that it occupied thousands of years ago.

But we must hurry on.

The railway across the peninsula does not follow a straight line, that being but about twelve hundred miles, but following the Ganges for nearly five hundred miles in a northerly direction, makes the distance at least one-third more.

At the end of three days, the train with our delighted friends arrived at Bombay. Here the detective experienced more trouble, for Benton insisted upon seeing the wonders of the city in company with his fair companion, and so he was obliged to accompany them.

They visited the renowned and wonderful library, the City Hall, the beautiful shops, at which

they purchased numerous articles, the mosques, the synagogues, the Armenian churches, more ancient than any on earth, perhaps; the splendid pagoda of Malebar Hill, adorned with two polygonal towers of magnificent proportions. And they visited the masterpieces of Elephanta, and its mysterious hypogea, concealed in the southeast of the harbor; the Kanherian grottoes of the Island of Salcette, those wonderful remains of ancient Buddhist architecture, and, in fact, every point of interest in this ancient city.

All this involved four day's time, and the anxious detective was in a towering rage, although he was so completely caught that he could not speak his thoughts, or do aught but follow the course of events as they transpired.

But here they were in Bombay, only about seven thousand miles from London, and it was perplexing in the extreme, and more so as they approached the end of their journey, to see how easily the two lovers fell off to follow any particular route, and the more they indulged in this sort of a thing, the more they felt like continuing it.

What bothered Pinkerton now was the fear that they would conclude to stay somewhere on the Red Sea, after they had reached Aden from Bombay, a distance of two thousand miles, but which could be quickly gone over provided there was no delays. In fact, Pinkerton himself lost all interest in the countries they were traveling through, for he feared that they would stop at some of the many places of interest which line the way along the Red and Mediterranean Seas, and put him to, perhaps, no end of trouble.

But at length the young people began to tire of Bombay, and took a steamer for Aden, at the junction of the Arabian and Red Seas, a place of great commercial importance, since everything from two continents and many countries centers there before passing up that river-like body of water, the Red Sea, to the marts of Europe.

All this while Clara Stanley had seemingly forgotten her own griefs in the presence of so much that was grand, historical and beautiful; and as time flew on, and she learned to love the noble youth with whom she had traveled so far, her desire to reach New York was not so intense as it had appeared to be before, although the memory of those at home often brought the tears to her eyes.

"And how are you enjoying yourself?" asked Pinkerton, on the day after their departure from Bombay.

"Oh, I am almost beside myself with delight! Had the journey been made under almost any other circumstances, I know I should have lingered over it a year or two," said she, fervently.

"But I suppose you will not stop again until you reach London?" said Pinkerton.

"I am not sure. We shall enter that historic body of water, the Red Sea, along whose green shores every acre of land is glorious in history. And at its junction with the Mediterranean, there is Jerusalem, around which cluster so many points of interest connected with our religion and civilization. And there is Greece and Rome——"

"But only think of the time it will take you to visit these places," said Pinkerton.

"True; but only think that I may never have another chance to visit them," said she, with much animation.

This was what he had feared and dreaded.

"Oh, for that matter, if I might be allowed to judge from appearances, you will, in all probability, go over the same route much more leisurely before long," said he, smiling.

"I do not understand you, sir."

"Mr. Benton——"

"What of him?" she asked, with a slight blush.

"Oh, I hope I shall offend no one."

"In what way?"

"If I hint at an early bridal tour."

Clara blushed like a rose, but made no reply.

"Mr. Benton has assured me that he is passionately fond of traveling," and he looked at her in a good-natured, fatherly sort of a way.

"So I believe."

"And as you are also fond of it——"

"Well, sir?"

"Oh, you know what I mean," said he, laughing heartily, but she only blushed the deeper, and made no reply.

Pinkerton was working one of his deepest and most delicate points, for if he could assure her that the opportunity was close at hand when she would have an abundance of time to travel, even in a closer relationship with Benton, she would be less anxious to tarry by the way, and make all the haste she could to reach New York.

His hints had more effect upon her than he was aware of; but of course she could not speak to Benton on the subject, and he knew it, so he sought the first favorable opportunity to converse with him regarding the affair.

They were gliding along finely through the Arabian Sea, with its magnificent views and sunny skies, and the prospect of reaching Aden ahead of the regular time was very good indeed, although Pinkerton's chief anxiety was as to whether Benton would stop on the way and compel him to go to the trouble of having him arrested, for the necessary delay in such a case would be almost equal to that occasioned by any flying visit they might make to any of the many points of interest near by.

"I suppose you will keep right on to the United States now, will you not?" he asked, as they were walking the deck and smoking together the day after his conversation with Clara Stanley.

"Well, I am not so sure about that; I have been thinking that perhaps I shall never have another opportunity like this of visiting some of the famous places which are now within easy distance," said Benton.

"Confound the luck!" thought Pinkerton.

"Don't you agree with me, sir?"

"Oh, yes; but how about Miss Stanley?"

"How?"

"Don't mention that I repeated this to you."

"Oh, certainly not."

"Well, she told me only yesterday that she was dreadfully anxious to get back to New York."

"Poor girl, I suppose she is anxious," mused Benton.

"Of course she does not feel like urging you along after all you have done for her, but she spoke very decidedly to me on the subject."

"Very well, it shall be as she wishes; I will make all haste to reach New York, where I hope to be able to be of even more service to her than I have hitherto been."

"Spoken like a brave boy," said Pinkerton, with new animation. "And besides—oh, you lucky dog! Besides, I suspect there will be a wedding trip follow before long, and how much more you would both of you enjoy this very journey around the world under such circumstances. Of course you would," and the old man poked him in the ribs and laughed merrily.

"That is very true, sir."

"To be sure it is. But please don't say a word that would lead her to suspect that I have betrayed her confidence, will you?"

"Not a word, sir. But I might have known from what she has told me of herself that she was not only anxious, but that it was positively

necessary that she should be at home as early as possible."

"Well, you know best about that. Ah, here she comes."

Benton sprang away from his companion, and with a hearty, joyous salutation, joined Miss Stanley, who at that moment came on deck, looking as radiant and beautiful as the morning.

Pinkerton watched them with a smile of triumph on his face.

"Ah, that trump took the trick. I shall now have no further trouble with them, and when we arrive at London all I shall have to do is to change my disguise and accompany them to New York," and laughing to himself over the fortunate turn, he went below.

The next day a storm arose which drove the steamer to the north, and she was enveloped in those black, driving clouds which sometimes sweep the surface of the Arabian Sea, and for several hours the pilot could not tell where he was going. But the wind and the tide were bearing them swiftly towards the Arabian coast, along which are scattered many islands and dangerous points.

It was not a fierce storm, and had it not been for the enveloping clouds the steamer would have been safe enough, and her officers known what to do. As it was, they slowed up the engines, keeping them just enough in motion to give the vessel steerage, and patiently awaited a change of the wind which should sweep the clouds away.

While half drifting in this manner the steamer suddenly ran upon rocks, where she was held fast and in a dangerous position. There was the utmost consternation on board; but none of the passengers manifested so much anxiety as did Pinkerton, the detective.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT FOLLOWED THE ACCIDENT.

In the course of an hour the weather began to clear up and they found that they were hard aground upon the Arabian coast, only about twenty-five miles from Aden.

The steamer was found to have sustained but little injury, but the question was how to get her off, and would she be able to continue her trip to Aden if she should be floated again.

When the sea was calm enough, the engines were worked backward with all their power, but it was soon discovered that she was so firmly aground amidships that it would take a high tide and some outside power to free her from her imprisonment.

A boat was therefore launched, prepared with both oars and sailors, to make for Aden, the nearest port where there was a surety of help, and the officers of the steamer waited as patiently as possible, although the questions of the passengers, together with their frightened condition, made the situation all but an enviable one.

All this while Pinkerton was in a state of the greatest excitement, and to add to it, a proposition was made among the passengers to take advantage of the delay to visit the various places of interest within a few miles of where they were detained, and to make the journey to Aden along the Arabian coast by easy stages, and meet the steamer there in a week's time.

Pinkerton talked with several of the passengers, and tried to convince them that the proposed journey was fraught with dangers, and that much time could be saved by remaining on board the steamer until she was pulled off, which she undoubtedly would be with injury.

But there were two or three experienced travelers among the passengers, and as they volunteered to act as guides for those who wish-

ed to take the trip, it silenced all the arguments which he could bring up, and the result was, that a party of about twenty, among which was George Benton and Clara Stanley, stood ready and were about to be taken ashore.

Pinkerton, still in his disguise of an English tradesman, was placed in a peculiar position. He had chased George Benton thus far around the world, starting from New York, but in spite of all of his ingenuity and the resources of the most skilful detective on the continent of America, was completely at bay, and in spite of himself he saw his victim about to slip from his view, unless he made one of the party and accompanied them.

This he at last concluded to do, although he was so wildly mad at the turn affairs had taken that he was ready to fight. Never before in all his experience had luck gone so steadily against him, but there was no help for it, and so he made up his mind to go with the tide which seemed to be bearing him along, and take things just as easily as his nature would allow him to.

Two of the steamer's boats were lowered to take the party, and a third one was laden with stores and necessities for the journey, and a complete understanding was had with the captain that they were to meet him at Aden in one week, and that he was to wait for them until the end of that time, after which he was absolved from any further responsibility, and could proceed on his voyage without them.

A week is not such a very long time, and so let us accompany the voyagers and take part in what they saw, experienced, and enjoyed, seeing that there is no way of pushing on ahead of the events which surrounded our characters.

After rowing a mile or more the boats landed at a little town, called Aba Am. There was but one wharf, and this was crowded with a motley lot of curious-looking people, a majority of whom were dressed in the Turkish costume, the colors of which produced a striking picture.

They all appeared to know that the company came from a wrecked vessel, and the utmost hospitality was extended to them.

After partaking of refreshments the guides made arrangements with some native carmen to take the entire party along the coast to Aden, and ten two-wheeled carriages, to which men harnessed some of those wonderful horses which have become so famous the wide world over, the dashing, fiery, Arab steeds, and in the course of an hour they set out at a flying pace over the road which skirts the shore of the Arabian Sea.

If ever there was a man ill at ease, it was Allan Pinkerton. But he possessed philosophy enough to smother his wrath and to make the best of everything which was forced upon him, while knowing that there was no help for it.

Arabia has been called the land of the desert, and so it is; but along the shores of the Red and Arabian seas, as well as along the banks of the many rivers, nature seems to be trying to make good for those sandy wastes, or make the contrast between life and death all the greater.

On every hand there was a display of fruits, flowers, and shrubs, that was almost wanton in luxuriousness, while the songs of rare birds greeted the ear, and the flash of their beautiful plumage caught the enchanted eye.

The road leading towards Aden is one of the best in Arabia, and compares favorably, in fact, with the best in Europe or Asia. Back from the coast some ten miles there is a range of mountains, and beyond the shore, that sea of sand, the Great Desert of Arabia, where quite as many have met death, and in a more horrible form, than ever perished on a road of the same dimensions. Paradise dwells on those

mountains and between them and the seas, but beyond there exists a very hell.

The company were whirled briskly along over the road, admiring the wealth of nature and its beautiful arrangement; with one single exception the whole party were delighted with the ride, and not a few were positively pleased that the affair had turned out as it had, since it gave them opportunities of viewing scenes and visiting spots and localities of interest, which they never would have seen had the steamer kept on her way to Aden without accident.

There were three other ladies in the party besides Clara Stanley, and a common fortune, as well as a common taste for the ancient and beautiful, had already made them friends, and as the curious carts drove rapidly along they chatted merrily and listened with much interest to the history or tradition connected with the different localities, as they were told by one of the old travelers comprising the company.

After being on the road for about three hours, the guide, who was driving the foremost team, halted at an old, ruined temple, so covered with earth vines, and the hoar frost of time, that it seemed but little more than a mound of earth, although a closer inspection showed it to be surmounted by a ruined dome, sustained by several large and substantial columns which had withstood the rain and the blasts of thirty centuries.

None of the travelers appeared to have heard anything about the ruin, and so the guide, who spoke both French and English, as well as Arabic, proceeded to give a history of the ruin.

"History and tradition reveal us this: when Moses led the hosts of Israel on dry land through the Red Sea, and it closed upon Pharaoh and his pursuing army, a small number of that army was saved, they being of a peculiar religious sect, and in partial sympathy with Moses, but being forced into the army of the Egyptian king.

"These arose to the surface, and constructing a raft out of the floating ruins of Pharaoh's army, they were born by the wind and tide for many hundreds of miles, and finally landed at this point, where they erected this temple to the God of Israel. Here they lived, worshiped, and finally died, leaving no heirs behind to follow their precepts, and so the temple finally became a ruin. The wild hordes who swarmed along these shores at the time, but who hesitated to attack these strange people, finding that the last one of them was dead, at length approached the temple and took possession of it. The absence of any unnatural demonstration, such as they had expected, gave them confidence, and in a short time the temple became a citadel, a stronghold to them.

"Other tribes met them in war, and after many years one of them obtained possession of it, and put every member of the enemy's army to death, and, in fact, left no more of a trace than those who built it left. They held it for years, and in time were conquered by a band of religious fanatics, who rededicated the temple to some unknown god. They became a powerful nation, and this was the heart of it. But other tribes and powers came, and they in turn were overcome and slaughtered. Again was the temple made a stronghold, until finally, the dawn of Christianity, and with it revolutions everywhere. A sect of these formed themselves together to conquer the world. One of the first places they attacked was this. They captured it and the Christian temple looked down upon the Arabian sea for the first time. Indeed, it was the first one that ever maintained itself.

"Then came a new order of things. Mohammed came upon the world with a different religion, and with fire and sword swept like a whirlwind

besom over Asia and parts of Europe; from that time this became a Mohammedan temple, and so remained for hundreds of years. Then Arabia became a power, and foreigners were driven from the state; a war of fifty years sufficed to do it, but in the meantime this temple had become a ruin, and has remained so ever since."

The company listened to the narration with the utmost attention. A part was historical and a part tradition, but it was intensely interesting to them. They got out and wandered over the ruins, commenting upon what they had heard relating it, and speculating upon its truth as shown by Arabian annals.

Even Pinkerton became somewhat interested in the place, although he would have been much better pleased had he been on his way to London or Paris with George Benton as a prisoner.

Finally, after roaming around for half an hour, the guide gave the signal to call them together for the purpose of continuing the journey. They started to comply, and were just passing through a thicket of palm trees, when a shrill whistle was heard, and in an instant twenty or thirty Arab bandits seemed to spring from the very earth, and presenting their pistols, demanded a surrender of the whole company.

Of course the wildest excitement instantly followed; and nearly every member of the party concluded that they had been betrayed by the guide, although he appeared to be the most surprised and indignant one of them all.

Pinkerton was wild with excitement, but Benton and Clara Stanley were perfectly cool.

There was a hot and animated conversation between the guide and the bandit chief, and they came to blows over the affair, although they were not suffered to fight, neither by the robbers nor by the tourists, who sprang to their relief.

But there was no hope of success in fighting against such a savage horde, and so the better part of valor was esteemed to be discretion.

Acting on this principle, they surrendered, having been assured by the guide that no harm would come to them, as this band only took prisoners for the sake of the ransom they might obtain for them.

The bandit chief quickly formed his prisoners into line, and marched them by a half-hidden and circuitous route into an opening beneath the ruins of the ancient temple, and after traversing a few hundred feet, they fount themselves in a huge subterranean vault, illuminated in the most fantastic manner, and rich in barbaric splendor beyond all compare.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOME OF THE ARAB BANDIT.

"GREAT Heavens!" ejaculated Pinkerton, as the scene of their imprisonment burst upon him. "What will come next, I wonder? If I ever get back to America, I shall be doing well. Did such fortune ever overtake a man as has attended me since I left New York? What will be the result of this, I wonder?"

He gazed around upon the wild splendor and magnificence of the subterranean chamber in which they were arranged. A hundred fierce-looking Arabs stood guard on every side.

The guide was the only person in the company who could converse with them.

The ladies of the party were firm, but almost bewildered by the barbaric splendor which flashed on them from every side of the vaulted chamber.

The room was about fifty feet square and quite thirty feet high, but being the home of the robbers, it was decorated with the most lavish style, and contained riches enough to redeem a kingdom.

How many years this place had been held as a robbers' stronghold, no one could tell, but from all that appeared, hundreds of years must have passed since the accumulation of riches and wonders had begun, for there were articles of art and ornament stored there which could not have been brought together in a shorter time.

The bandit chief was as much like the pictures of such fellows—pictures that we have all seen at various times—as could be well imagined.

He was a tall, angular person, almost as black as a negro. His eyes were like the diamonds with which his dress and arms were studded, and there was all of the vicious, cruel and tyrannical in his appearance that we should naturally expect to find there.

As soon as the prisoners were all safely disposed of, the chief began an animated conversation with the guide of the excursionists, and from the manner in which it was carried on, it soon became evident that there was no treachery on the part of the guide, a fact which the party had unanimously come to the conclusion upon. Or, if it was all a delusion and a show, the acting between them was of such a superb order that no one could suspect it for such. In fact, the chief drew his cimeter and appeared on the point of slaying the indignant guide, but he appeared to see that discretion was the better part of valor, and so he retreated with signs of surrender.

This being settled, the guide approached the prisoners and informed them that they were in the hands of Wi Segard, the notorious bandit chief, but there was no danger of their lives being taken, providing they could pay the ransom which he was even then arranging against each of them.

That was a cool proposition, as they all regarded it, considering how they were circumstanced, and when it became known, there was an indignant stir among them and a resolution made to strike for liberty.

George Benton was the first one to propose a rising, and as they all agreed to it, he was chosen a leader without hesitation; his first move was to consult the guide, whom he half suspected, even in spite of his show of virtue.

"Look here, Sebe," said he, fiercely, "I have that about me which will send you to the devil on a flying gallop if you are playing us false and I find it out. Now, tell me what this rascal expects."

"Highness," said the guide, bowing with the most humiliating salaam, "I speak the truth."

"Well, what is it? How came you to bring us into this trap, this thieves' lair?"

"Highness, I knew it not."

"Bah! How is it that you act as guide, if you knew nothing about this bandit?" demanded Benton.

"They have lately returned here. Three years ago they were here, but they went away and the ruin has only been occupied by owls and wild animals. I knew nothing of their return."

"If you speak the truth you may live, but if you speak false, you will never return alive to those you have left behind."

"So Allah save me," said he, placing his hand upon his heart, and looking exceedingly submissive.

"But what is to be the result of all this? Where are the horses and carts?"

"I know not, highness."

"Ask the chief at once."

The guide went to where the chief sat, and they held a short, animated conversation.

"They are held out here in the palm groves to await events," said he, returning.

"That is well; now, what are you—a friend, or a foe?" demanded Burton.

"A friend, highness," said he, bowing low.

"How will you be proved?"

"Name a way, highness."

"I will, since I have your life in my power; whatever befalls our party, we are going to make an attempt at escape."

The guide started, looked hurriedly around, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Remember, if you value your own life. We believe that you are in league with the bandit. If you are not, and are willing to fight with us to effect our escape, well and good; then we will believe you innocent; but the first indication of treachery on your part seals your doom."

"Highness, my cimeter, my pistols, and my life are at your disposal."

"It is well; we will see how true you are."

"Try me, anyway, highness."

"Very well. Mingle with the bandits and find out all you can. Stop—they will ask a ransom for us, will they not?"

"Yes, highness."

"Very well, tell them that we are all rich, and that the ransom will be surely paid."

"Yes, highness," he said, and bowing once more he withdrew and joined some of the Arab bandits.

"Now, are we all agreed on a trial?" asked Benton, turning to a group of his friends.

"I am," said Pinkerton, promptly.

"Are you armed?"

"You bet I am," said he, and, in fact, had Benton known the truth, and precisely who he was, he never would have doubted it."

"Heavens! what a rash thing!" said another.

"What show have we against such a band?" asked a third.

"None, unless we make up our minds to fight our way out," said Benton. "In a few minutes their messenger will be ready to take our letters to our friends for ransom. Now let each of us write a letter to some imaginary person, in which we can state our misfortune, and ask for money to pay our ransom. After the messenger has gone we may be able to act as we wish to."

"A first-class idea," said Pinkerton, who was already astonished at the bravery and fertility of invention displayed by the youth he was chasing around the world for a murderer."

The guide tells me that we are looked upon as a mess of women, and that the chief even disdains to take our arms until after he finds that he has nothing else to take but them, and possibly our lives, and so we can take advantage of his contempt for us. Only be cool, and we may yet work our way out of this in safety. How is it with you, Clara?" he asked, turning to Miss Stanley, who had kept close to him.

"I feel safe with you, George," said she, placing her arm within his own.

"Brave girl! If they will all do as well as I am sure you will do, all might be well. Speak with the other ladies, for they crouch there almost paralyzed with fear," said he, pointing to them.

"I will try," said she, going to them.

"Now all we have to do is to watch and wait," said Benton, addressing his companions.

"No, that is not all," whined a Frenchman.

"What else?"

"We must fight against fearful odds."

"Well, what of it? Have we not ladies in our care? Are we not good for three or four of these lousy brigands each? There are Englishmen and Americans among us, and I will take almost any chance with them. Look! They are already making preparations for their supper. This may present us the very opening we want. Hush."

"Who comes here?" asked Pinkerton, as a bejeweled barbarian approached them."

"The man for our letters, perhaps. Yes, he is bringing writing materials."

This was true. The personage was armed with

a beautiful ebony writing desk, inlaid with pearls and precious stones, on which was placed pen, ink, and paper.

Benton was the first one to take advantage of this, and writing a letter to some imaginary person, whose address he gave in the town they had left, he read it aloud to the others, and when the desk was presented to them, they wrote as nearly like it as possible, until every one of them had written a letter.

This done, the chief examined them and seemed greatly pleased. A messenger was at once dispatched to find the personages to whom the letters were addressed, and then the whole band of cut-throats began to sing, drink, eat, and be merry, each feeling that a large sum of money would be the result.

Night drew on apace, but there was not the slightest evidence of it within this ancient vault, for it was continually lighted with wax candles, and a dozen Nubian slaves were employed in attending to them. But as the hour of the feast approached new wonders were brought forth to grace the rich marble tables which lined the far end of the wall.

Golden flagons, urns, plates, candlesticks, cups, each ornamented with precious diamonds, emeralds, and other precious stones, were brought from some secret recess and placed upon the tables. Then the smell of the rich fruits, wines, and viands reached the senses, and it seemed as though a fitful dream was about to be realized there.

Then another table was placed for the prisoners, and more gold and silver dishes placed upon it. But before the repast was brought the chief and his band had become seated and were partaking of their feast.

The guide returned from among them and approached George, who was still regarded as the leader.

"Highness," said he, bowing.

"Well?"

"They are about to hold a feast."

"Well?"

"They will probably drink deep on the strength of their exceeding good luck."

"All right. Let them."

"You gave letters to your friends?"

"Yes."

"They will rest and feast until an answer is received from them."

"They will, eh? Well, they will rest long and drink deep, I am thinking."

"Do you know, Benton, that if we don't get out of this before that messenger returns, and the fraud is discovered, that we shall be put to death without shrift or warning?" said Pinkerton.

"I know it. But it was the only chance we had. Yet we must get out of this before he returns. Understand?"

"Yes, you are right. I am with you, but can we trust the others here?"

"I think so. At all events, Clara will set the cowards an example which they cannot hesitate to follow."

"I hope so."

"Go among them and arouse them."

"All right."

"Guide, approach," said Benton.

"Highness."

"Stand by me and watch the feast. Tell me now it progresses. What guards are set?"

"None just now save one or two who attend our horses. But a guard will be set after the feast."

"It is well. Stand by me."

By this time the Nubian slaves had placed the supper upon the table set for the prisoners, and they at once gathered around it. The utmost attention was shown them, and they almost forgot

that they were prisoners, so rich were the viands, so luscious the fruits, and so delightful the rare old wines.

They ate and conversed among themselves, all the while feasting their senses upon the strangely wild and beautiful scene around them. New lights flashed upon brighter and richer jewels; new perfumes wafted through the chamber, coming from censers that seemed borne on wings and all unseen.

The robber band ate and drank as though entirely oblivious to the presence of their prisoners, and as flagon after flagon of wine was brought on and drank, they became more hilarious, and sang wild songs in the Arabic tongue. Some of them leaped upon their stools, and with wild and fierce gesticulation recounted some mad adventure in which they had been engaged.

The prisoners had by this time become so much interested in all this that they almost forgot their own situation. It was a scene of the strangest and wildest enchantment, such as many of them had seen represented upon the stage, or in the pages of romance (which they delighted to see or read, but which they never believed could ever exist in reality), but George Benton never for a moment lost the level of his head.

The guide stood close by him as he sat at the table, and kept him posted regarding how the feast was progressing, and how drunk the robbers were becoming at every stage.

But it was more an orgie than a feast, and it was nearly midnight before their songs became tame and their conversation maudlin. Then one by one they fell from their stools, and went to sleep just where they chanced to alight.

The chief was the last to succumb; and speaking of a piece of fireworks going out in a blaze of glory, he went out, or rather went down, in the blaze of a red face, and the mixed melody of a dozen songs.

The guide, with eyes ablaze like coals of fire, was watching everything, and reporting to Benton every moment, seeming to take extra pains to show his virtue and loyalty.

At length the hour of midnight arrived, and scarcely half a dozen of the robbers remained upon their stools around the banquet table, and these were so drunk that they could do but little else than maintain their seats.

"Now is the time," said Pinkerton.

"Yes. Are we all ready?" asked Benton.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Then follow me. Guide, lead the way out of this."

"Yes, highness."

"Let the ladies cling together, and take a position between front and rear file. Hush! Move with the utmost caution!"

The bravery and energy of young Benton gave every one confidence, and his instructions were followed to the letter.

"Guide, lead on!"

The company started, and marched to the entrance of the ancient chamber without any interference.

CHAPTER V.

AN ESCAPE FROM THE MYSTERIOUS VAULT.

JUST outside of the entrance to the ancient and mysterious abode of robbers they encountered six Nubian slaves, who had been armed and set as a guard before the entrance.

The moment the prisoners appeared they understood the movement, and at once presented their matchlocks to bar their passage.

Quick as thought Pinkerton and Benton pinked them with their revolvers, and those who escaped unhurt at once fled into the darkness, leaving their way clear, if they could only find it.

A savage murmur behind told them that the

drunken bandits had become alarmed from the reports of their pistols, but they knew they were grossly intoxicated, that they could offer but little if any opposition to their escape, and so they pushed on, out into the terrible darkness, relying entirely upon the fidelity of their Arab guide.

He knew the ruins well, and after some five minutes' walk, led them out into the grove of palms where their horses were secured.

Without a moment's hesitation they were unhitched, and the entire party, all unharmed, got into the carriages, and were soon out upon the road again.

Whip and spur put the horses to their best speed, and in half an hour they were well on the road to Aden, if not entirely out of danger.

George Benton had been a moving and leading spirit in the escape, although Pinkerton, the detective, still disguised as an English merchant, had behaved with uncommon bravery, and Benton had noticed it with some wonder, believing him to be an elderly man, and one who, to all appearances, would avoid rather than court danger.

"I like you, Mr. Parton," said he, after they were a few miles on the road, for both he and Miss Stanley occupied the same carriage. "You are a thoroughbred, I'll wager, even if you are somewhat advanced in years."

"Thanks, young man. But you must bear in mind that an Englishman never cowers in the face of danger, any more than an American does," said Pinkerton.

"I know it well: I am proud to know it; for are we not of the same blood?"

"We are, indeed. And the ladies——"

"Heaven bless them! Did they not behave well?" said the detective, with a well-assumed burst of feeling.

"They did; and why should they not, when they had the example of Miss Stanley, here?"

"Quite right, young man."

"Thank you, gentlemen," said she, and as Benton's arm happened to be around her waist at that moment, what was more natural than that it should have contracted a bit, and given her assurance that there was one who appreciated her heroic behavior.

In the meantime the other members of the party were riding along, congratulating themselves on their fortunate escape, and speaking in the highest terms of young Benton, Pinkerton, and Clara Stanley. The night had been dark, but by this time a late half moon had sailed into the heavens and shed considerable light upon the landscape.

What must have been the thoughts of Allan Pinkerton, we will leave to the reader who has followed this narrative.

"Do you know I have an idea?" said Benton, after a few moments' silence.

"Indeed?" said Pinkerton, who was busy with his thoughts.

"Yes; it may be a wild and desperate one, but my heart is in it."

"What is it, George?" asked Clara.

"You saw the wealth contained in the robbers' lair?"

"Yes; enormous wealth," said Pinkerton, without stopping to think.

"It seems like a dream to me," said Clara.

"It seems like a golden reality to me," said Benton, with much earnestness.

"In no other country under Heaven could they exist and get together such hoards of wealth, and yet be unmolested."

"True. But I propose to molest them."

"What? How?" asked Pinkerton quickly.

"I propose to rob the robbers," said Benton, with a little laugh.

"Rob the robbers! What do you mean?"

"Simply that, and nothing more. There can be but a hundred or such a matter of them, and I think that fifty courageous fellows might get away with the whole band, and possess themselves of all the vast wealth which they have there."

"Great Heavens! Are you crazy, young man?"

"Oh, George, think of the danger!" said Clara.

"Yes; but think of the wealth."

"What nonsense. Why, a thousand men could not take that stronghold."

"Not take it now?"

"Now, perhaps, when they are all drunk."

"Well, that drunkenness will last for many hours yet, don't you see?"

"Yes; but we cannot return now."

"Can't we, though? I think we can. The guide tells me that there is an Arab village but a few miles ahead, a lot of hardy fishermen, and there we may obtain assistance."

"No—no. It is the veriest nonsense," said Pinkerton, who was glad enough to escape, without any inclination to renew the chance of losing his game.

"Well, you may think so, but I do not. The wealth contained in that cave is worth risking at least a life for."

"George, don't think of it," said Clara.

"But I must. Those robbers have stolen all their wealth, and why should we not take it from them if we can?"

"But I would not like to lose you at this juncture, or any other," she said, pressing his hand warmly.

"But I had rather be lost myself than to think hereafter that I had seen a chance to become rich by a simple risk, and had not improved it. I should hate to think so for your sake, Clara."

"Do not think of me."

"But you have given me permission to do so, have you not?" he whispered.

"Yes; but I fear you might be killed."

"I had rather be, by Heavens! than to let such an opportunity escape me. I should lose myself, which I value next to your love."

"The thing cannot be done," put in Pinkerton.

"We shall see," replied Benton, who was now thoroughly aroused.

Clara had seen him exhibit the most undaunted bravery, as also had Pinkerton, but neither of them had ever seen him when he showed so much enthusiasm and inclination to court danger.

She was not so much surprised, for she knew and felt that beneath that calm exterior there beat a heart brave as a lion's, and she was prepared to see almost any exhibition of it, although she had become so much attached to him through all this long journey, that she could not bear to think that he was running into any unnecessary danger.

But Pinkerton looked upon it in quite another light. All along he had been at a loss to understand how a youth with such calm, amiable ways could be guilty of murder. But now he thought he saw the bubbling up of that inner nature which is so often hidden with that desperation one might expect to find in the character of a murderer, and as fortune had compelled him to chase thus far around the world.

But he was bound to use every effort he could put forth to dissuade him from the rash and dangerous plan he had in view, for whichever way it might eventuate, it would certainly be the worse for him, for should he get killed, it would deprive him of the reward he expected to reap from this long chase, and should he succeed, it would place

him in the possession of wealth that might frustrate all his designs.

While he was thus cogitating, Benton leaped from the carriage and ran ahead until he caught up with the one in which the Arab guide sat.

This movement convinced Pinkerton that Benton was really in earnest, and now his only hope was in using his influence with Clara Stanley, whom he knew to have much power over him, to dissuade him from the rash enterprise which seemed to fascinate him so thoroughly.

But she was an adventurous girl, as the reader has learned by this time, and at heart she sympathized with her lover, and would almost have joined him in his design. She was only held back by that queer, womanly instinct of love, which sometimes makes, and often mars, great enterprises in this world.

Consequently, Pinkerton made but little out of her, and finally, when the carriages arrived at Ulm, the little fishermen's village spoken of before, he soon learned that nearly every member of the party had been won over to the project, and in less than half an hour at least thirty hardy fishermen had joined the party, each one of whom had suffered more or less at the hands of the robbers, and there appeared to be no chance for him to use his influence against the project.

It was now about one o'clock in the morning. The fishermen and members of the wandering party seemed almost wild with the enthusiasm which Benton, with the aid of the Arab guide, had instilled into them. They were all well armed, and it seemed as though they had only been waiting for a leader to rise to the highest deeds of valor.

The ladies, and those of the party (only three), who could not be induced to join the expedition, were lodged in an inn, and after refreshing the horses, all was in readiness for a start.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RESULT OF A DESPERATE UNDERTAKING.

Up to this time Pinkerton had used his most eloquent arguments against the proposed expedition, but finding that the arms and hearts of at least fifty resolute men were against him, he at length concluded to join in the raid, fearing that he would lose sight of his victim if he did not.

"Good—good, Mr. Parton, if you only go into this thing with a free heart," said Benton, taking him by the hand; "for I like your spirit."

"But it is a wild adventure."

"True; but if we win, only think of it. There are untold thousands to share."

"Yes, but if we fail?"

"Well, then we go down, that's all. But I am in for it, as we say in America, and if you wish to take chances, why, there's my hand."

"Good, I'll take it."

"Bully! I am sure we shall win."

"I like your spirit," said Pinkerton, and he meant it.

"All right! We are all ready to start now. Are you well armed?"

"I have two seven shooters."

"Well, that means fourteen of them. Come along, for the men are waiting for us."

"Are they all well armed?" he asked, for finding there was no retreat, he now began to feel anxious regarding the chances.

"Every one of them, with a trusty gun and ready pistols."

"But they are not revolvers?"

"No, although many of them have two double barreled ones each. But each of them carries a short sword which will serve them well."

"Benton, I never saw a man with so much spirit in such a hazardous undertaking."

"Then you cannot be very well acquainted with Americans."

Wasn't he, though?

"But come, we must away," saying which he hurried to the head of his little army, and gave the order to mount and march.

Each of them was mounted on a fleet Arab steed, and each seemed anxious to move.

Benton was about to throw himself into his saddle, when Clara Stanley approached him.

"Not a word for me, George?" she asked.

"My dear girl, there is a chance that I may win wealth and glory for you in this expedition, and I may never return. For your sake, and to satisfy a wild ambition, I go into this with all my heart. But I will tell you this, and it may be my last declaration—I love you as dearly as my life. If I return, we can defy the hand of fate with the wealth I shall win. If I fail and do not return, everything I have in the world is yours. You know how I have told you that I have nobody in the world that I can call my own, save you. Take this pocket-book. It contains all I have in the world—not a mean sum, however—and in it are a few directions which I would like to have you follow. But in case I do not return, the contents of the book will enable you to reach America and fight your enemies."

"But do not say you will not return," said she, throwing her arms around his neck.

"I do not say it, darling. On the contrary, I believe I shall return. But remember and pray for me. Farewell;" and he kissed her tenderly, and then vaulted into his saddle.

His horse was a fiery one, but he was a superb rider, and the beautiful beast soon found it out. Waving his hand to her, he dashed ahead, and was soon lost in the darkness, and the cloud of dust which had been raised by those who were in advance of him.

If ever lady was proud of her knight, Clara Stanley felt proud as she saw him speed away, flushed with high resolve; but in spite of all her pride and admiration, she could not repress her anxiety for his safety. She had not only learned to love him, but felt that her future life and happiness rested upon him, and so she knelt down there in the moonlight and murmured a prayer for his safety. When she arose the sounds of the horses' hoofs had died away in the distance.

In less than five minutes Benton had overtaken the foremost of the party, and was riding along by the side of the faithful guide, who had proven himself so loyal.

As for Pinkerton, he was completely dazed by the rapid, warlike events which surrounded him. Little did he think when he set out from New York in quest of George Benton that such scenes would overtake him, and that he would be riding behind and acknowledging him a leader. For a few moments he seemed to have lost his great identity in the presence of the youth who had hitherto appeared to be so quiet and unassuming, yet who was now riding at the head of a savage company who looked up to him as a natural leader.

And well he might have been struck with astonishment, for the very spirit of rule and daring seemed to be upon him, and his eyes actually flashed in the moonlight as he gave rein to his Arab steed and dashed onwards towards the robbers' cave.

"But this is no time for me to hesitate," said he, arousing from his train of thought. "I half like the expedition myself, and were I differently situated I would go into it as a leader instead of being led. Yet what a romance this will be if I ever survive to tell it. That truth is stranger than fiction I hardly needed this event to demonstrate."

By this time they had nearly reached the abode of the robbers.

It was now nearly two o'clock in the morning. The moon was high in the heavens, and doing her best to illuminate the magnificent landscape.

The Arab guide, with Benton by his side, led the way directly to the grove of palms where their horses had been tethered before.

Silence reigned around.

Benton issued his commands in whispers, and being taken up by the guide, they were given in the same way to his followers.

Securing their horses in the grove, they at once formed and followed their leader through the dark and winding path towards the hidden door of the robbers' chamber.

Every man had his weapons ready for instant action.

With catlike tread they crept along, each eager for what might follow.

Arriving at the door of the chamber they encountered a portion of the same band of Nubian slaves that had attempted to dispute the escape of the prisoners an hour or two before.

These saw their danger, and fled into the darkness without offering any resistance or making the least alarm.

Hastily stationing two men at the outer entrance, Benton led the way into the stronghold of the bandits.

The scene had changed but little. The robbers lay snoring where they had left them, with the exception of about a dozen, who were aroused, and instantly showed fight.

But Benton and his party did not shrink for a moment; closing with the half wakened robbers they fought with desperation, and after a struggle of five minutes the enemy was vanquished.

But not without inflicting some hurt upon the attacking party, and those who were sleeping off the effects of their drunken feast were partially aroused, and staggered blindly and aimlessly about, inflicting quite as much harm upon their fellows as they did upon their enemies.

A large proportion of the Arab fishermen appeared to have a deadly spite against the robber chief, and while still in his drunken sleep they rushed upon and cut him to pieces with their daggers.

They fought like devils, for every one of them had suffered at their hands, and becoming perfectly unmanageable, they continued their fierce onslaught until nearly every one of the stupefied robbers had been killed.

It was a terrible slaughter, but every one of these Arabs was only avenging unnumbered atrocities, which they had long sought an opportunity for doing, and there was no such a thing as restraining them.

But such a battle could not last long, and it was one for the good of society after all.

Within ten minutes after it began Benton and his party were complete masters of the place.

Then he began the gathering of the spoils.

Benton turned to look after his friends. He found several of them badly wounded, and the old Englishman (Pinkerton) severely.

"Don't mind me," he said, resting upon a velvet cushion from which one of the robber chiefs had been dragged.

"Never fear, you shall be seen to," said Benton, hurrying away.

He seemed like a mad whirlwind, and the Arabs were obedient, now that their enemies were slaughtered.

Load after load of rich booty was brought forth and heaped upon the tables.

The candles burned low in their sockets, but the light was still upon the golden vessels which were brought forth from their hiding places. In the midst of the loot and wedges of

gold were brought forth, and curious weapons, studded with jewels so rich and rare that they almost made the senses ache; coin in leathern bags, jewels set and unset, and wealth enough to redeem a nation was their reward.

A cart was found, and all this rich spoil was placed in it.

Daylight glimmered over the mountain tops before the victorious company were ready to move off with their spoils.

The Arabs were almost beside themselves with joy, and quite as much on account of having slaughtered their old enemies as the thought of having taken all the spoils which they had fished from the surrounding country for so many years.

In fact, they were humble fishermen, and hardly knew the value of money, caring as little for it as they knew.

But without much delay they were all got upon the road and started back to the little village from whence they had set out.

The wounded were taken upon the horses and in the arms of those who had escaped unhurt.

Benton took Pinkerton upon his own saddle, and holding him tenderly in his arms, put spurs to his horse, and led the way ahead of the party back to the village.

He was badly wounded, having received a gun shot through the hip, and was thereby incapable of either walking or riding.

What must have been his feelings as he rode along, held tenderly in the arms of the youth he was pursuing around the world to arrest for murder?

Not one of the villagers had returned to their beds after the expedition had set out so suddenly, and of course the ladies and fellows of the traveling party had remained in anxious watching as well.

Benton was the first to arrive, and Clara the first to greet and welcome him.

Somehow she felt that he would return all right, but her heart instantly went out to the wounded old man whom he bore in his arms, and having placed him on a cot in a fisherman's hut, she devoted her most earnest efforts in dressing his wounds and making him comfortable.

The rejoicings in the village were wild and barbaric when the visitors returned, laden with untold wealth almost, and bearing the news that the scourges of the country had been slain.

An impromptu feast was at once prepared, and Benton was made the chief of it. They appeared to regard him as some superior being, and were willing to take his word as law in anything.

The wounded were cared for with the utmost feeling, and then the spoils were heaped up before Benton, and those who had assisted in taking them stood there to receive their share, or whatever he might in his superior wisdom grant them.

He was the master of the situation, as he had been of others, and through the guide he communicated his ideas to them.

They had no use for jewelry or golden plate. Instead of that he would bestow the coin upon them, and this being gladly agreed to, he proceeded to make each one of them rich with the contents of the coin bags.

This made them regard him almost as a god, and not one of them was there, male or female, who would not have laid their lives down for him then and there, had there been need of it.

About noon all this had been arranged in a most satisfactory manner, and then gathering up the remainder, a dozen great fortunes, the company took leave of the honest villagers and started to continue their way to Aden, where

they went to meet the steamer, as per agreement.

Carts were provided for the wounded, and the utmost attention was bestowed upon them by the fishermen. They even went so far as to escort them several miles outside of their village, and only parted with them when there was no longer any excuse for their escort, but remembering them, even to this day, as superior beings who came to disenthral all and enrich them.

Those who have followed the fortunes of the heroes of this story can appreciate the situation.

Every member of the party was almost a millionaire, although it was conceded that George Benton deserved the largest share.

By nightfall they had reached Aden.

CHAPTER XVII.

WEALTH AND COMPLICATIONS.

ON arriving at Aden, at the entrance of the Red Sea, the party found that the steamer had reached there some hours ahead of them, having been towed from her dangerous position without sustaining any very serious damage, and being now all coaled up, was ready to proceed on her voyage through the Red Sea to Suez.

The wounded were tenderly placed on board, and the stores of wealth given in charge of the steward.

The recounting of their adventures became an interesting subject on the steamer, of course, and those of the passengers who had remained on board after the accident were not only anxious to learn all about it, but disgusted to think that they had not joined the land expedition.

There was much sympathy manifested for the wounded, but for none more than for the old "English merchant," (Pinkerton), with whom they had become so familiar during the voyage, and whom they had learned to respect on account of his years.

His cabin was made as pleasant as possible by the passengers, and the steamer's surgeon lent his best efforts toward his recovery. George Benton and Clara Stanley were with him almost continually, and detective though he was, and although he believed that he was tracking Benton to the gallows, yet the kindness which he manifested so softened his heart that he almost wished that he had never undertaken the task.

Of course Benton never suspected Pinkerton, and while still regarding him as an elderly Englishman, returning home from an extended tour on business, his whole manly nature went out to him, and they conversed without reserve.

But after all, Pinkerton was not entirely satisfied that he was not tracking the murderer of Maude Wagner back to the United States, where justice would be meted out to him. There had been times since leaving New York in pursuit of him that he had indulged in doubts regarding the possibility of his being the murderer, but this last adventure against the bandits, wherein they had been led by him and secured a fortune apiece, convinced him that he had the nerve for almost any desperate attempt, and the coolness to carry it out.

And so the great detective lay there in his bunk and was tormented with doubts as he had been previously by fears, and all the while both Benton and Miss Stanley read to him or furnished him amusement, which was quite contrary to what he might have expected from a murderer.

"Where are we now?" he asked, as Benton entered his cabin one day.

"Off Suakin, on the African coast. To-morrow we shall arrive at Mecca, the famous city we have all heard so much about. I can hardly resist the temptation I have to stop off there and remain over until the next steamer," said Ben-

This was wormwood to the wounded detective.

"But you forget Miss Stanley," said he.

"Not at all. I know how important it is that she should reach New York at the earliest possible moment, but a week will make little difference."

"It might be fatal, young man."

"True, but I think not. I would dearly love to remain in Mecca and vicinity a week."

"But only think of it; Mecca is not the only place of interest between here and America, and if you should stop at them all, or only a portion of them, it might consume three months, and that, or even a portion of that time, might perhaps prove fatal to Miss Stanley's interest."

"I beg pardon, Mr. Parton, but why is it that you are so much interested in myself and Miss Stanley?" asked Benton, in quite another tone of voice.

The question would have unbalanced a less keen and astute man than Pinkerton, all things considered. But he remained cool and collected.

"Oh, only a natural regard for those who have befriended me," said he.

"Ah!"

"And I may perhaps confess a little selfishness at the same time, and admit that I like the company of you both. Heavens! if you feel that I am too greatly interested, and too forward with my suggestions, why, I will say no more about it."

"Oh, there is no offense, sir, none at all. And come to think of it, I am in duty bound to see you safely at your home in London, since I have been the cause of your wounding," said Benton.

"Don't mention that, young man. It was a desperate thing, I will confess, but at the same time I must admit that I have become possessed of a fortune by it, although wounded rather seriously."

"Yes, but the doctor tells me that your wounds are healing very fast, and that the probabilities are that you will be able to leave your bed before we reach London."

"I hope so. But you will pardon the foolish sentiment of a fond old man? I don't think I should mend half so fast were you to leave me."

"Very well, then, I will remain with you."

"Thanks, you shall be rewarded."

"Sir, I am rewarded whenever I know that I have done a worthy deed."

"I believe it. Let us say no more about the matter; I know you will do right whatever you undertake," said Pinkerton.

It was a hard thing for him to say, but he was obliged to stoop to flattery; for there he was, wounded and confined to his bed, and the man he was chasing around the world wholly at liberty to go where he liked and escape from him entirely, as he would undoubtedly do if he only half suspected that the man he was associating with was a detective bent on hounding him to justice.

"Let us speak of something else—our booty, for instance," said Pinkerton.

"Good! The captain and officers say that it will be worth a hundred thousand dollars a share in London," said Benton, with animation.

"Indeed! So much as that?"

"That is the lowest figure. But by actual weight it comes to much more than that, and as we can dispose of it at greater advantage there than in the United States, why, we will stop over there long enough to get the whole exchanged into bank of England notes."

"A good idea."

"And you can probably assist us in doing so, on account of your standing."

This was another complication that Pinkerton had not foreseen, and it almost stopped his breath for a moment.

"Oh, yes, certainly; that is, if I do not have to go directly to Paris on business," said he.

"Business? you would not think of that in your present condition?"

"If I am well enough to move, or be moved, I would not dare to take the responsibility of not following out the programme I started on. But that need not hinder you at all. I can give you letters, and so will the officers of the steamer, which will enable you to sell your booty without suspicion. However, we will talk further about this at some future time, when we are nearer England."

"Very well. But I fear I have wearied you by my long talk, and so will retire."

"Oh, no."

"Ah, but I feel that I have. I will see you again this evening."

"But Miss Stanley?"

"She will come and read to you after supper."

"Very well. I shall be so thankful."

"And so will she, that she can comfort you."

With this he left the cabin, and Pinkerton was once more alone. But what thoughts surged through his brain. He tried to move, to see if his wounds were improving. They were, and his heart leaped to his mouth as he thought of the triumph he might yet achieve.

"Confound these complications," he muttered. "How long will it be before I am free of them? But I have been well paid—well paid. One hundred thousand dollars! Well—well, I could afford to lose the reward for the murderer, were it not that my professional reputation was at stake. He is a noble fellow, even if he is a murderer, and I almost hate to give him away. But I must. Pinkerton must not fail; must not indulge in any sentiment. What do they think of me at home, I wonder! How can they account for my long absence? Well, I can telegraph them when I arrive at London, if not before, and then my reception will be all the more hearty, and the fame of my detective agency will be spread all over the world. There is sweet with all the bitter in life, although I have had a large share of bitter in this chase."

Night soon came hovering upon the Red Sea and after supper, while the passengers had gathered upon the deck of the steamer, Clara Stanley was below, reading Byron to Pinkerton.

But George Benton and his fellow travelers, with whom he had become so familiar, and who had learned to regard him with so much favor, were sitting or strolling about the decks, gazing upon the twilight lit shores of Arabia, where almost every acre of land is historical. It was one of the most beautiful sights that ever the eyes of tourists dwelt upon.

There they were, plowing through the waters of the Red Sea, in the arms of modern inventions. As with the Mediterranean Sea, they seemed to be sailing over buried nations. Who does not know about Moses, who parted the waters of this sea, and led the children of Israel over on dry land, and then overwhelmed the hosts of Pharaoh as they attempted to follow!

The whole channel of the Red Sea must be strewn with human bones, as every student of history is aware. Egyptians, Tyrians, Persians, Carthaginians, Sidonians, Greeks and Romans, there they lie, side by side, beneath the eternal waters of this river-like sea, and the modern steamer sails the whole course over buried nations.

It may be the corruption of these dead hosts that now adds brightness to the phosphorescence of the waves. Persians, and in fact, all eastern people, believe in the superstition that exists on this subject, which represents the spirits of those departed thousands, whether on land or sea, as hovering over the spot where they fell, or where

the ruins of their tabernacles are found, so that in plowing the Red or Mediterranean Seas we travel through armies of ghosts more multitudinous than the waves. These unrestful spirits sometimes ride upon the foam, and in other times repose in those delicious little billows which look like excavated emeralds between the crests of the waves.

It is this, say the Orientals, that creates the phosphorescence of the sea, for whenever there is light the billows flash with the luminousness of vanished nations, and concentrate, as it were, the moonlight, and the twinkling of the stars upon the surface of this historic sea.

This is, of course, all imaginative romance and superstition, but true it is that both the Red and Mediterranean Seas possess properties of light in the shape of phosphorus, which might well awaken superstition, and even make the philosopher of to-day hesitate before pronouncing what it should be attributed to.

There was no moon, and after Clara had read to Pinkerton for some time, she joined her lover on the after deck, and together they gazed over into the dark but sparkling waters, and indulged in fancies and speculations quite as romantic and far from the truth as Orientals might have done.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SENSATION ON THE MEDITERRANEAN.

THE Red Sea is something over one thousand miles in length, and is one of the most delightful bodies of water, especially to the tourist, on the face of the globe.

But the five or six days required by the steamer to make the passage between Aden and Suez passed pleasantly, and even Pinkerton was able to go up on deck and witness the exceedingly interesting passage of the steamer through the canal which modern science has created, uniting the Red and Mediterranean Seas, without experiencing much difficulty.

And why should he not have been interested? and how could anybody help being interested? To say nothing of the wonderful canal which unites the two seas, and which revolutionizes the commerce of the whole world, there is the lovely modern town of Suez, the nestling place of half the distance between England and the Indies, and near by there is Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and a thousand great historical associations which must charm the traveler, come he from whatever part of the globe he may.

But after a short stop at Suez, the steamer continued on, and soon began to plow the waters of the blue Mediterranean, the scene of some of the most wonderful exploits that history has ever recorded, or the world ever known. Who has not heard of the wonderful, fanciful (almost) island of Cyprus?

Past that they sailed, while the breath of flowers and the wealth of romance filled the air and delighted the senses. And then Candia, but little less noted both in history and romance, and then up along the beautiful shores of sunny Italy. What scenes of historical interest; what a wealth of view greeted the eye on every side!

A short stop at Pula, on the great island (almost a continent) of Sardinia, and again the steamer plunged onward towards the islands of Majorica, Minorca, and Ivica, at each of which landings were made, and then up the long stretch of sea bordered by the magnificent shores of Spain, and so onward through the bright waters of the Mediterranean Sea towards the Straits of Gibraltar, which connects it with the Atlantic Ocean.

Day after day the magnificence of scenery and the fulness of delight greeted the passengers of the steamer, all of whom had become friends

by this time, and the near approach of home, that was felt by many, made them almost wild with enthusiasm.

A large number of them were bound either for London or Paris, but none of them felt in higher spirits than did George Benton and Clara Stanley, who felt as though they could almost see the shores of America as soon as they passed Gibraltar and were out upon the broad Atlantic.

But one evening, just as the sun was going down behind the shores of Spain, there was an unusual commotion on board the steamer, and the officers seemed greatly interested in watching the approach of a strange looking steamer, which appeared to be coming from the direction of Cape Palos.

She did not belong to any line of steamers that they knew of, and the question was, what was she, and where bound?

She was sailing directly down upon them, going at full speed, but as yet showing no signals, and when at the distance of about half a mile they blew the whistle and signaled her to acknowledge herself.

But on she came, and finally there was a puff of smoke at her bow, and a shell came whizzing through the air, and burst almost over the steamer.

"What does it mean?" asked the first mate.

"I am not sure, but I think she is a Spanish pirate," replied the captain.

"What! one of those rascals who never take prisoners or leave a ship afloat?"

"She certainly looks like one of them."

"But where are the Spanish gunboats that should be cruising around here?"

"Heaven only knows. Poor Spain is in such a ferment now with home affairs that she pays but little attention to what transpires outside of her borders."

"But this fellow means mischief."

"I fear so," said the captain.

Just then another puff of smoke, and another shell burst a few yards ahead of them, and the captain rang the bell to stop the engines, and ordered the man at the wheel to bring the steamer up to the leeward, and then he awaited results.

The passengers gathered on deck when the first shell burst, and in excited groups they were now awaiting the approach of the strange steamer.

"What is it?" asked Benton, of the boatswain, who chanced to pass near by where he stood.

"A Spanish pirate," said he.

"What! a pirate?"

"I think so."

"May it not be a revenue cutter?"

"No. She shows no flag whatever, and we all think she is one of those prowling pirates who make a rendezvous along the Spanish coast, and pounce out upon unsuspecting and unprotected vessels who pass through the Mediterranean hereabouts."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Benton, gazing anxiously around to see if any other craft were in sight. "Why, we are alone; no other sail in sight."

"True, and that is why she is bearing down upon us," said the boatswain, moving away.

The passengers gathered around Benton, whom they had learned to regard as a leader.

Pinkerton had by this time so far recovered from his wounds that he was able to leave his room, and to pass a portion of his time on deck, and he was also one of the excited ones who naturally turned to young Benton.

"What shall we do?" was the earnest inquiry of every one.

"What does the captain say?" he asked, as that officer came towards them.

"This is a Spanish pirate, and I am sorry to inform you that we have no means of beating

him off, and that he will probably board us and pillage us from stem to stern," said he.

"No—no! this must not be," said Benton.

"But how can we help it?"

The young man gazed around upon the faces of the anxious passengers who stood about him.

Pinkerton, who had begun to indulge in hope, now felt his heart sink within him.

"How many good men and true have you?" he asked, suddenly.

"Perhaps twenty. Why?"

"And how are they armed?"

"Not at all."

"But have you no weapons on board?"

"Very few."

"That is bad. Have you hot water hose?"

"Yes, and perhaps a dozen pistols might be mustered."

"Good! Muster them, and have the men stand ready with the hot water hose. We may beat them off, if they attempt to board us," said Benton, earnestly.

"Do you think so?"

"I do. Give orders at once, please."

"I will do so," said the captain, and he turned away quickly.

"Clara, you go below with the other ladies, and leave us to fight this thing out as best we can," said he, addressing the ladies.

"But let me remain with you, George," said Clara, beseechingly.

"Please do not ask to, for we can all do much better in your absence. Excuse me, but such is the fact. Go below as quickly as you can, for the steamer is close upon us," he added, taking her hand tenderly.

"It shall be as you say, George, for if we cannot assist you, we are at least brave enough to witness and not interfere with you."

"Spoken like the heroine I knew you to be," said he, leading her towards the cabin stairs.

In the meantime the captain had ordered all the officers and crew possessing arms to get in readiness, and await orders, while four lines of hose leading from the boilers were quickly got in possession, and brave men to man them stood ready to obey almost any instructions.

"My friends, we have got to fight," said Benton, returning, and addressing his fellow passengers. "We are all armed, I believe?"

"All armed and ready," was the reply.

"Let me assist you to your cabin, Mr. Parton," said he, turning to Pinkerton, who had from the first been an anxious observer of what was going on.

"No—no, let me remain here," said he.

"But you will be in danger."

"Perhaps, but I have my pistols, and should be miserable if I could not use them," said Pinkerton.

"Noble old man!" said Benton, taking him warmly by the hand.

"The best way," said Benton, addressing the passengers, "is to appear to be absolutely helpless until they attempt to board us, then to show them what our revolvers were made for."

This was instantly agreed to, and each man quietly braced himself for the emergency.

Meanwhile, the captain had gone upon the "bridge," where he stood awaiting the slow approach of the stranger.

By the time he had arrived within a thousand feet of the steamer, the decks of the pirate swarmed with swartly rascals, each one armed to the teeth, and standing out in bold relief against the ship, on account of the bright colors of their costumes.

As the two vessels approached, the captain of the passenger steamer hailed the suspicious stranger:

"What steamer?"

"Lay to, and we will come aboard," said the captain of the pirate.

"What for?"

"I will show you presently."

By this time the two vessels were almost alongside of each other.

The sea was as calm as a mill-pond, and a strange hush seemed to have settled upon the face of nature, as though she was holding her breath in suspense.

As the sides of the steamers rubbed together, the pirate threw grapples on board of her intended victim, and the next instant a hundred bearded villains, cutlass and pistol in hand, made a dash as if to board the steamer.

"Back!" cried Benton, springing to the bulwarks, followed by at least fifty of those who had armed themselves for the fight.

"What?" yelled the pirate chief, drawing his cutlass, and rushing to the side of his vessel.

"Back, or take the consequences!"

"The consequences, then! Board!" he yelled, and his men began to scramble up the sides for the purpose of reaching the bulwarks.

As they did so, Benton led off and sent the foremost to the bottom of the sea, while the others picked out their men and were nearly as fortunate in their aim.

In an instant all was confusion and consternation. The pirates were not in the least dismayed by this unexpected turn in affairs, but as fast as one of them fell another flew to take his place, while the captain yelled and cursed in Spanish, urging them on, and at length attempting to lead them in person.

The rapid discharge of pistols, the wild shrieks of the wounded, the groans of the dying, filled the air with the very breath of hell.

But the boldness and numbers of the pirates began to prove too much for the little band of brave passengers, and about a dozen of them succeeded in gaining a foothold upon the deck.

But just then three or four streams of scalding water were turned upon them, and a howl of anguish went up that would have touched the heart of anybody who did not know that villainous cut-throats were being so sorely defeated.

Bullets and swords they feared not, but this scalding water proved too much for them, and like yelping curs, they either threw themselves back on board of their own vessel or overboard into the sea, to avoid the terrible scald.

The pirate captain saw that he was over-matched, that he had attacked the wrong steamer, and gave orders to his men to take off the grapples so that he might escape.

But in this he found himself too late, for not only had his men, those who were yet alive, become utterly demoralized, but Benton and a few other determined spirits had posted themselves near the grappings, and resisted every attempt of the pirate to make his escape.

"Surrender!" he shouted.

"Never!" retorted the pirate.

"Take that, then," said Pinkerton, and with deliberate aim, he sent a bullet through the wicked heart of the pirate chief, and he tumbled headlong upon the deck.

"Good! Board and capture her!" Cried Benton, leaping upon the deck of the pirate.

"Yes—yes!" cried a dozen voices, for every one had become imbued with the spirit, and less time than it takes to write it, twenty or thirty men leaped over after him.

As before stated the pirate crew was by this time so completely demoralized that no opposition was made, and as the streams of hot water were still flushing the deck, those who might under almost any circumstances have fought to the

last, now threw down their arms and cried for quarter.

George Benton was master of the pirate in less than two minutes from the moment he leaped upon deck, and as soon as the firing ceased the captain of the steamer joined him.

The remainder of the pirate crew were at once placed in irons, and arrangements made to take her along with them to the nearest English port, where she could be turned over to the authorities, and from whom they might receive the reward due them, and the pirates the punishment due to their high crime.

The vessel—the *Dragon*—was fitted up with all the luxury that wealth could purchase, and the second officer of the steamer was placed in command, with George Benton as captain.

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER THE CAPTURE.

THE importance of their capture could not at first be understood, of course, but upon closer examination it was found that the *Dragon* was one of the most complete and luxuriously furnished cruisers that ever floated.

Nor was she lacking every convenience and improvement of modern vessels. Unlike the old pirates who used to sail from Spain and infest the unprotected main, this vessel was provided with everything that science could suggest. In fact, this was the only kind of piratical craft that could hope for success in these days of fast-sailing steamers, for not only would they have to be rapid sailers to overtake their prey, but to escape from the men-of-war steamers that are to be found in the Mediterranean, they must be fleet of keel in order to succeed.

The steamer resumed her journey towards Gibraltar, closely followed by the *Dragon*, in command of our hero, George Benton.

Pinkerton, who had quietly done so much towards the capture, was now in a high state of excitement, for Benton was out of his reach, and he could not guess what step he might take next.

They were now sailing along over a magnificent sea, the shores of Africa to the south, and the land of wild romance and pirates—Spain—on the north, and only about three hundred miles from Gibraltar.

Finding so many comforts and luxuries on board of the pirate, several of the passengers elected to be transferred to her, and among them Clara Stanley.

This worried Pinkerton even more than the absence of Benton on board of her, for now there was no tie to bind him to the steamer, and he might escape at Gibraltar and go out of his reach entirely, as he most certainly would do if he suspected the truth.

But he had one consolation—Gibraltar belonged to England, and he could have him arrested there just as well as in London, provided he did not stop there and escape to Spain, whose privateer reaches close up to the stronghold which the English owned.

In consulting with the captain, he had learned that it had been agreed to take the prize to Gibraltar, and leave her there in the hands of the authorities, after which the trip would be resumed to London, whither word would reach the government, by telegraph, regarding the disposition of the pirate, and the amount of reward which would be paid to her captors.

This pleased the detective somewhat, and being well enough to go on deck with crutches, he watched the captive closely as she followed in the wake of the larger steamer. The dead pirates captured in the *Dragon* had been buried in the deep waters of the Mediterranean, and those who

had surrendered were securely ironed below, while the liveliest of the steamer's passengers were on board, and with music and singing made glad echoes leap back from either shore, from the sounds that had told the listeners how happy they were. The tragedy of the capture was all smothered in general joyousness.

On the third day after the capture, the two steamers arrived at Gibraltar, and the pirates were finally delivered to the English authorities.

The excitement became intense when the news spread that the *Dragon* had been captured; for she had long been a noted pirate, and had eluded the swiftest steamers that had been sent against her.

The populace crowded upon the docks, and as Benton and his companions—taking advantage of the ten hours' stop—walked about the streets of the city, they were everywhere regarded as heroes, and fêted by everybody, especially the sailors and shippers who had suffered so much from this very pirate.

A large number of the passengers accompanied young Benton and Clara Stanley, on invitation of the commandant, to the world-renowned fortress, visiting the mountain overlooking the straits of Gibraltar, a very mountain of stone, hollowed out and made one of the strongest fortresses in the world, and spent several hours in going over the wonderful structure.

They had all read of this wonderful fortress, whose guns commanded the navies of the world, and to visit it and have every portion pointed out and explained by the commander himself, who took delight in so doing, because they had captured a cruiser that he had sent several unsuccessful expeditions against, was a treat that comes to but few travelers in the general run.

Pinkerton, in the meantime, remained on board the steamer, and gradually learned to curb his anxiety, remembering that Benton had at least one hundred thousand dollars' worth of property on board, which he would probably not leave behind.

Finally the time was up, and the passengers were all called on board, and in a merry mood they gathered on the deck as the steamer left the wharf and steamed bravely out into the North Atlantic ocean.

Then Pinkerton was as happy as the rest of them, for after a sail of about a thousand miles his task was comparatively ended, and he would have his victim well in hand.

The passage from Gibraltar, through the Bay of Biscay, was one of the pleasantest they had any of them ever experienced, and those who had sailed together so long, and had shared so many dangers, won so much renown and wealth, were, of course, on the best of terms, and became even better friends than ever during the passage from Gibraltar to London.

Glancing at the map, it only seems a short distance from the Great Stronghold to the Metropolis of the world, but in reality, as they find who sail over it, even on the wings of steam, it is a long distance (over fifteen hundred miles, or about six days' sailing under favorable conditions.)

But the time passed merrily, and on their arrival at London, the end of the journey, so far as this steamer was concerned, they found that the telegraph had already announced them, and that they were regarded as heroes, and even saluted by the men-of-war and forts which they passed on their way up the Thames.

But the arrival at London produced, of course, much excitement among the passengers as well as that general excitement in the public mind which the telegraph had prepared for. Here the majority of them were to separate, some to remain, and some to go in other directions, and

it having been agreed to take all their spoils to one certain jeweler, the greatest interest was manifested among them regarding how they would be received.

The telegraph, however, had prepared the way, and not only were they all regarded as heroes, but a large premium was offered for the gold and silver articles which had been captured from the robbers. In fact, there was a lively rivalry among several jewelers, and the result was, that without leaving the steamer, each and every one of the passengers who had participated in the attack on the bandits found no difficulty in disposing of his booty, and receiving even more than they had anticipated.

Pinkerton, among the rest, with an eye to the main change, had received the money for his share, and nearly on an equal with the others, he found himself possessed of almost one hundred thousand dollars in bank of England notes.

But just here was where the most particular part of his work came in. Here he was supposed to leave his companions, and to follow out a course he had hinted at so often.

Benton and Miss Stanley were soon settled, and before engaging a passage to New York, the question was, whether they should visit the old Englishman, Mr. Parton, and partake of his hospitality while seeing the objects of interest in "England's tight little isle."

Pinkerton was wide awake to all this, having now almost recovered, and just as soon as they had all received their money, and arrangements had been made for paying the prize money due them for the capture of the pirate, he began to simulate preparations.

"I am so sorry," he said, "that I cannot extend you an invitation to visit my home, but I this moment received a letter which makes it imperative that I should go to Paris, where I may be detained for several days. But knowing that you must be in New York as quickly as may be, I trust that the disappointment will not be so great, and that we may meet again under more favorable circumstances."

"We are very sorry," said Benton, taking the old man's hand as they were about to go ashore from the steamer they had been on so long, "but feeling that we should be in New York as quickly as possible, we waive this invitation, and we will agree to visit you within a year, when we can renew this acquaintance and enjoy England at our leisure."

"I shall be only too happy," said Pinkerton, and so they separated, Benton and Miss Stanley to go to a hotel, previous to taking a steamer for America, and Pinkerton to throw off his baggage, without for a moment losing sight of them.

CHAPTER X.

ON A STEAMER BOUND FOR NEW YORK.

Do our readers comprehend the distance they have already traveled in following the fortunes of George Benton?

The circumference of the globe, taking it in the way he has traveled, is nearly thirty thousand miles, and here they were with only three thousand miles between them and their native land, reaching which they would have circumnavigated the earth.

And what a chase it had been on the part of Detective Pinkerton.

Four days were spent in London, during which Benton and Clara Stanley parted with nearly every one of the acquaintances they had made on the long voyage from Bombay to London.

One gentleman and his family—one, however, that he had not known very familiar or well acquainted with, since he had taken no part in

Feeling sure of his game he had thrown aside

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She was flying from a personal oppression, and I resolved to go with and protect her, intending all the while, as you must know, to return to New York, and do all in my power to convict the murderer."

"It is a strange, and yet consistent story," mused Pinkerton.

"You ought to know it, seeing that you have followed me around the world, and watched my actions," said Benton.

"So far as that is concerned, I respect you as highly as any young man I ever met in my life, and if you can prove what you say, I must acknowledge that I have made a great mistake," said Pinkerton, thoughtfully.

"Of course I can prove it. You know the reputation of Tom Darley, and it will only be an easy task to trace out that diamond cross and his relations with the murdered girl."

"You are right."

"And do you agree to my proposition?"

"Yes, if you agree that I am to have my eye upon you until the guilt of Tom Darley can be established."

"I will, if you are not offensive."

"I would not be that to a man who has so much credit as you have."

"But this whole affair is offensive to me, though I cannot blame you for the part you have played. You have simply made a mistake, but you must acknowledge that it has been a profitable one."

"I do acknowledge that," said Pinkerton.

"Then we are at least partial friends?"

"Yes, I'll agree to that."

"On that let us part."

"Very well, good-night."

"Good-night."

And the two men shook hands cordially as they separated.

There was a spectator to all of this, and an eavesdropper to the conversation that had taken place between Benton and Pinkerton.

It was the distinguished gentleman whom we have before noticed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MYSTERIOUS PASSENGER.

It could hardly have been otherwise than it was. The distinguished stranger, whom the captain and officers of the *Greece* had received with so much ceremony, and who passed most of his time alone, evidently felt bored by the position he was placed in.

He had taken a seat directly aft of the wheel-house, and was dreamily observing the fading shores of his native land, and at the same time giving his mind free range over some of the most important passages of his own life, when he suddenly found himself panned in, as it were (although completely hidden from view by a life-boat that hung in its davits), by Pinkerton and George Benton.

At first he felt annoyed, and would have left the place, had not the terrible words fell on his ears, the words wherein Pinkerton accused Benton of being a murderer—and charged him to the contrary.

There was now no doubt he had been, and imply that he had purposely been an eavesdropper, and was waiting for them to go, and was thereby enabled to listen to the entire conversation.

When they moved away, he got up and cast a look at them both without being seen himself or exciting suspicion.

The face of Pinkerton did not surprise him in the least, for his conversation had prepared him for just such a person, keen, sharp and eagle-eyed.

But when his eye fell on George Benton, the youth accused of murder, he started in surprise.

He had expected to see a hardened, vicious-looking man, instead of the cultivated, aristocratic-looking youth, so young that there was hardly a shadow of a mustache on his upper lip, and so delicately high bred that there was nothing of the brute in him.

"What a strange man!" mused the old passenger, looking at the young man who was standing by the wheel-house. "I wonder what he is doing here."

He would have liked to know more of the young man, but he was not allowed to do so. He was a passenger, and he must remain so. He was a man of high rank, and he was a man of high rank. He was a man of high rank, and he was a man of high rank.

muttered to himself. "Let me see again," and again he walked past them, but in such a calm, dignified way, and withal so seemingly indifferent to all about him, that he would have failed to arouse the suspicion of any one. "It is a fine face—a noble face. Whose face is it I have seen that his reminds me of?"

While thus walking up and down on the deck amidship, Benton finished conversing with Mr. Parks, and started aft to his state-room.

He watched him with a strange interest.

But before going many yards he was met by the captain, who shook hands with him in the most cordial manner, for the story regarding the capture of the bandits' treasure, and the Spanish pirate, both of which reflected nearly all upon Benton, had become known on board, and the brave captain honored the hero of such achievements more than he would all the nabobs in the world.

The old passenger was puzzled, and turned to Mr. Parks, who still stood where Benton had left him.

"I beg pardon, sir; but you are acquainted with the young man who just left you?" said the old passenger.

"Well, sir, I feel honored in the short acquaintance that I have with Mr. Benton. I have been a fellow passenger with him from Bombay."

"Bombay?"

"Yes, sir. You have probably seen the account in the London papers of the capture of the bandits near Aden, and the subsequent capture of the Spanish pirate, the *Dragon*?"

"Certainly. Who has not read of those bold exploits?"

"Well, that young man is the hero of both of these affairs."

"Is it possible?" he asked, turning again to take another look at Benton, who still stood conversing with the captain of the *Greece*.

"Indeed it is."

"And that is the young American of whom the papers have spoken so admiringly?"

"It is."

"I am delighted to know it, and shall take the first opportunity to make his acquaintance. Do you know anything regarding him?"

"Only that he hails from New York?"

"From New York?"

"Yes; that he has only just quitted school, as he told me, and that he is in the company of the most beautiful, lovable and spirited girl that I ever met," said Parks.

"His wife?"

"Oh, no; Miss Stanley."

"His affianced, perhaps?"

"Undoubtedly. They seem very fond of each other."

"And it is true, then, that they each became possessed of a fortune by the booty they took from the bandits, to say nothing of the prize money coming from the capture of the Spanish pirate?"

"I know it to be so."

"Well—well; he and they deserve it. But who is the dark-featured man standing forward there by the captain?" asked the old gentleman, pointing to Pinkerton.

"I do not know."

"Was he not along with you?"

"No. I think I never saw him before," said Parks, looking at him for a moment.

"I am much obliged to you, sir. We may meet again before we reach America."

"I trust so, sir."

"Thank you," said the old man, and he moved towards where Pinkerton was standing.

Pinkerton never allowed anybody to approach him without giving them a critical examination. It was his habit and nature.

The mysterious passenger walked up to where he stood and regarded him closely.

"Who is this?" he instantly asked, of himself, and he regarded him once more with a look that was anything but agreeable.

The old gentleman flushed.

"You seem to know me, sir," said he, with a cold, hardy voice.

"No, sir, I do not," replied Pinkerton, looking quickly away into another direction.

The shades of night were now falling upon the sea, and the last fading outline of land was lost to view.

"Well, sir, from your close scrutiny of me, I must know but perhaps you would like to know me," said he, holding him a card and looking at him.

Pinkerton took it mechanically, and after waiting the old man until he went down the stairs, he glanced at the card.

There was only one name on it.

SIR CHARLES MENTON.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MYSTERIES BEGIN TO DOUBLE.

PINKERTON, the detective, stood there on the deck of the steamship *Greece*, while the twilight was losing itself into night, and gazed upon the bit of Bristol board in his hand, on which was traced, in most delicate characters, the name of Sir Charles Menton.

What was there about this aristocratic old man, this titled gentleman who had treated him so curtly, that fascinated him? Had he ever seen him before?

He cudgled his brains for an hour, and until the ship's lights were set and deep darkness reigned upon the face of the English Channel.

But yet he could not locate him. There was something in his face and manner that was strangely familiar, but where he had seen it, if, in fact, he had ever seen it at all, puzzled him greatly.

"He evidently knows me, and does not love me, as his peremptory conduct fully shows; but he has the advantage of me. I must sleep on this thing, for it must never be said by my rivals that I was ever at fault. By the way," he added, "I hardly know how to place myself in regard to this Benton, whether at fault or not. I know this Tom Darley well, and the more I think of it, the more I remember that he was somehow mixed up with Maude Wagner. But this new affair, this Sir Charles Menton, I shall have to sleep on that," saying which he started for the dining-saloon, where the most of the passengers were already gathered.

The English Channel is not renowned for its placid surface, but on this occasion it was remarkably calm, and not half a dozen of the passengers felt the effects of the ship's motion, and consequently a brilliant party was assembled at supper.

Pinkerton walked into the saloon, and his keen eye was not long in finding out that George Benton and Clara Stanley were the center of attraction, and that the first supper on board the *Greece* was more like a reception held in their honor than anything else.

He also noted that Sir Charles Menton was seated nearly opposite the young couple, and was watching them closely, while at the same time doing his share towards honoring the young hero who had made himself so famous.

There was a cloud resting on Benton's brow which the reader can readily account for, but to those who did not know him, he was a bright, beau ideal of a hero, and many were the glances which lovely eyes shot towards him, and envious feelings sent out against Clara Stanley, who, as ever, seemed to engage his whole attention.

Pinkerton took a seat where he could observe all the chief actors, and while eating his supper, everything came to his ken.

Merry voices blended with the clatter of dishes, and the budding of new friendships was increased by the savor of good things which were brought up on the cabin table.

Ever been on a steamer to or from Europe, when you met your fellow passengers under like circumstances? If you have, you can understand the feeling and general sentiment which prevails among the passengers when they assemble for the first meal after sailing.

There is almost always somebody on board who acts the jester, either good or bad, and it was so on this occasion.

A fat, red-faced Englishman, by the name of Marks, who had made it a point to get an introduction to George Benton, having heard of his wonderful doings, was very free, and being acquainted with several of the passengers, he took it upon himself to act as sponsor for the young man, a general introducer and talker.

He was one of those happy fellows who have the faculty of making everybody else happy and at home wherever he may be, and being, like all Englishmen, a hero-worshiper, he not only felt honored at being acquainted with Benton, but he was determined that everybody else should become acquainted and feel so too.

After the bulk of the repast had vanished, there came a basket of wine from somebody's order (it was from Sir Charles Menton, but nobody knew it), and Marks at once nominated himself master of ceremonies.

"Ladies and gentlemen, fellow passengers," said he, rising with his glass in his hand after the waters had been taken all around, "I feel proud of the acquaintance of one of our number, and when I meet on his name I am sure you will all experience the feelings. You have all and all read the London papers of a young American who succeeded in capturing the most renowned bandit that ever infested the Arabian coast, and you have also read of the substantial reward

The detective felt sure that he was confessing the whole thing to him, for they both cast glances every now and then towards him, but he pretended to be absorbed in a copy of the *London Illustrated News*, and not to observe them in the least.

But without apparently looking at them, he could even study the expression of their faces, and note the hot flashes of indignation which occasionally swept over the old man's aristocratic face. And these seemed in greater contrast to the looks of affection and pride with which he regarded his son, since one would follow the other so quickly.

Presently Clara Stanley came into the cabin, and Benton sprang to meet her, as she stood bowing to some of the passengers, who gathered there in groups, seeking all sorts of ways for amusement.

She held out both her beautiful white hands, which he took, and led her back to where the baronet was seated, saying that he had a surprise for her.

And a surprise it was indeed, when he introduced Sir Charles Menton as his father.

But the old baronet was charmed with her, and as he had already learned her history from his son, he could not wonder at the feelings which had sprung up, each for the other.

And so the whole day passed away in thus becoming better acquainted, and learning more regarding the lives and dispositions which were to be so intimately associated in the future.

In the evening they dined at a private table, and it was plain to be seen that Sir Charles was quite as much taken with the beautiful girl as his son was. She appeared in the evening, looking exceedingly well, for while in London she had replenished her wardrobe, and was now enabled to appear more like herself than before.

Benton—let us still call him so—was more than pleased at the turn things had taken, for nothing could make him happier, after the knowledge that she loved him, than to know that she esteemed his father and he was delighted with her.

So after dinner he left them alone and went out upon the between deck to enjoy a cigar; there were several others there, and among them, Pinkerton.

"Good-evening, Benton, or rather Menton. Allow me to congratulate you," said he.

"Thanks; you have heard about it, then?"

"To be sure. Who on board has not? Why, they are all talking about the romance in real life, from the captain to the stokers. And well they may call it a romance, and I only hope that I have made a mistake regarding you, although I had rather lose all that I have gained in money than to have it said."

"But it will have to be said."

"I more than half believe it."

"And yet greater men than you have made mistakes. How do you like Sir Charles?"

"He is undoubtedly a thoroughbred. And rich, I suppose?"

"I believe so. I will tell you the whole story some time."

"I should be pleased to hear it," said he, not admitting that he had heard it already.

After some further conversation the two men parted for the night, and Pinkerton retired to his cabin, where he began to write up the notes of this remarkable adventure, and from which this story is written.

Day followed day, and the nearer they approached the shores of the New World the brighter the skies seemed to Benton and Clara Stanley. Sir Charles Menton lost the look of sternness and settled gloom which had hitherto marked his features, and in the company of his

son and Miss Stanley, he appeared to grow younger and brighter every day. And to celebrate the happy event which had become so well known on board, he gave a grand dinner to the passengers, and had a superior one given to every member of the crew and the steerage passengers.

In due time they arrived in New York, completing the tour of the world, and in accordance with an agreement entered into between Benton and Pinkerton, the party were driven at once to the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where he was to remain unmolested until the next day, when they made an agreement to meet and get upon the track of Tom Darley, the murderer of Maude Wagner.

And upon consultation it was agreed that it would be better for Clara to remain there without informing her friends of her arrival until such time as Pinkerton should learn what had become of Rodney Barlow, whom he wanted and whom she wished to avoid.

But what a change! What a journey they had accomplished. They left New York in midwinter, had circumnavigated the globe, and at the end of three months were back again, to find it budding from the breath of early spring. And yet how short the time seemed in comparison to the wonders they had done and seen. It was more like a dream than aught else, at least to Benton and Clara Stanley.

But while Clara was waiting for Pinkerton and he for Benton, Sir Charles Menton sent for the old nurse, Nancy Farrell, and in the presence of witnesses, and with the assistance of able lawyers, he established and confirmed what his heart had told him was true long ago.

CHAPTER XIV.

RIGHTED AT LAST.

BEFORE closing this true but romantic history, we must turn to Rodney Barlow, a rascal on whom a whole book might be written, but who must be summarily dismissed with his deserts in this instance.

The reader will remember something of his doings in connection with Clara Stanley, from the history she gave of him to Benton soon after they first met. The last we saw of him was on the wharf at San Francisco, where he had arrived in pursuit of Clara, but only just in time to see the Pacific Mail steamer moving from her dock with his prize on board.

Of course he could not understand it all. He only knew she had escaped him in company with somebody, and knowing how desperately she hated him, he knew that she would take almost any chance in the world to escape from him.

But that escape was a death blow to his hopes and calculations. Without her he could not come into possession of a rich mine in California, and after impatiently going over the whole ground, he resolved to take the next steamer and follow her to Yokohama, in the hope that he might regain her.

A whole week elapsed before the next steamer sailed, and a more miserable wretch than he was during those six days, would be hard to find.

He sent his servant back to New York with instructions regarding certain business affairs, and then set sail for Yokohama.

Arriving there, he managed to obtain news of the runaways, and so he followed on to Hong Kong, arriving there eight or ten days after they had left. But he was a keen-scented rascal, and he soon got upon so fresh a trail, and, with money, learned so much regarding them, that he became convinced that they were bent upon making the tour of the world for the sake of getting back to New York and escaping him.

So he followed on, just as Pinkerton suspected he would, and just as he was sure he would when he arrived in New York and learned that he had sailed for Yokohama.

With this knowledge, he set an officer to watch the arrivals of the next few steamers from Europe, while he returned to Benton, and allowed Clara Stanley to go to her friends and tell them of her remarkable adventures. How much of a sensation she created, we will leave our readers to imagine.

In the meantime, Pinkerton had got upon the track of the notorious gambler rough, Tom Darley. Benton announced himself as ready to go with him and make an affidavit regarding the tragedy (which had by this time become almost forgotten) but Pinkerton had his plains all laid, and would make no other move.

At the end of a week his officers had traced the diamond cross, which had been torn from the neck of the murdered girl, directly to Tom Darley, and procuring a warrant he electrified the city by arresting him and having him held for the mysterious murder now almost forgotten.

When Darley learned of the evidence that had been accumulated against him both positive and circumstantial, he gave up to total despair, wrote a confession of his guilt, and then committed suicide in the Tombs.

This freed Benton from all suspicion. In fact, he had never been suspected by any one but Pinkerton, and on condition that Benton should never say anything about the wild chase around the world, he agreed to keep the whole affair a secret.

Hardly had these events transpired when Rodney Barlow arrived in New York after a long journey around the world in quest of his escaped prize, but before he could institute any inquiries as to whether she had arrived or not, he was arrested for a forgery committed in Boston, and another in New York, and lodged in the Tombs, the very night on which Tom Darley confessed and took his own life.

Pinkerton had thus triumphed in one thing, and by his trip around the world had succeeded in bringing to justice one of the greatest rascals that ever lived.

By this means Clara Stanley was set free from the thralldom which had encompassed her, and her mother was ultimately put in possession of the property which Barlow had held so long from her, and which he had obtained possession of by fraud.

It was a strange affair all through, but perhaps it was that very strangeness which conduced to the obtaining of justice for all. Thus the murder of a poor girl had brought about a series of events which resulted in great good, and which might never have come to them, but for the tragedy.

Well, our story is nearly finished.

Three months after their arrival in New York, George Benton and Clara Stanley, accompanied by Sir Charles Menton and Nancy Farrell, took passage back to grand old England, and there, in the sounding aisles of ancient Worcester's historic cathedral, they were married with much pomp.

The story of George Menton became known, and linked with his heroic achievements, with which England had become so familiar, he was everywhere regarded as a true nobleman, and a worthy heir to rich and honored Sir Charles.

More than a year has passed since then, and although George Menton and Clara Stanley have been man and wife this length of time, they are yet like lovers, and never seem to tire of recounting the strange adventures which caused them to be CHASED AROUND THE WORLD.

[THE END.]

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